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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Properties and Possessions in Three of Thomas Hardy's Novels

by

Rebecca Bersagel

A THESIS

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IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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PERMANENT ADDRESS:

10818 81 Ave

Edmonton

Alta T6E 1X4

DATED April 15 1988

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Properties and Possessions in Three of Thomas Hardy's Novels submitted by Rebecca Bersagel in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

.....Juliet Mcmaster.....

Supervisor

.....Bruce E. Gow.....

.....Walter Pitman.....

Date..December 11, 1987.....

Dedication

To Bruce, with love.

Abstract

Barbara Hardy points out that "[e]ver since Fielding designed an appropriate dwelling for Allworthy in Tom Jones the houses in fiction have been carefully planned and furnished." In the novel's tradition of appropriate habitations, Hardy uses properties and possessions to suggest much about the lives associated with them; expressive things range from the houses his characters inhabit to the relics, accessories, and personal emblems they possess. Such objects are expressive of individual attitudes and appetites as characters gather around selves what is meaningful to them. In Far from the Madding Crowd, The Return of the Native, and Jude the Obscure, Hardy plays with creating appropriate habitations, making them in varying degrees expressive of the individuality of his characters in their social worlds and embodying his increasingly pessimistic vision of home.

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Table of Contents

Chapter — Page

Dedication iv

Abstract v

Acknowledgements vi

I. Introduction 1

II. Far from the Madding Crowd: That Young Lady-Farmer's Property ..5

III. The Return of the Native: Six Miles Distant 34

IV. Jude the Obscure: The Shabby Purlieu 63

Conclusion 100

Bibliography 103

I. Introduction

The name Thomas Hardy invariably conjures up images of Wessex, memorable characters, and a sense of the texture of life from his major novels. Such recollections derive their potency from the visual impact of Hardy's art. As Norman Page convincingly argues, Hardy's greatest natural gift was his eye, and "his keen response to the visible world was of course sharpened and disciplined by his training and practice as an architect, which left its mark on his writings--directly in the many precise descriptions of buildings."[1] It is indeed with an architect's eye for detail that the novelist draws attention to the houses which dot his Wessex countryside. But his was not an eye focused on the physical world simply to recreate a picture of his beloved Dorset.[2] While there is a relationship between the life of the actual landscape and the literary image of Wessex, Hardy manipulated the "real" for his artistic purposes.[3]

Hardy's division of his fiction into three groups places Far from the Madding Crowd, The Return of the Native, and Jude the Obscure among

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[1]Norman Page, Thomas Hardy (London: Routledge, 1977) 66.

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[2]In the General Preface to the Wessex Edition of 1912 Hardy states that "though the people in most novels are dwellers in a province bounded on the north by the Thames, on the south by the English Channel, on the coast by a line running from the Hayling Island to the Windsor Forest, and on the west by the Cornish coast, they were meant to be typically and essentially those of any and every place where

Thought's the slave of life, and life time's fool

--beings in whose hearts and minds that which is apparently local should really be universal.

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[3]Andrew Enstice has done a study of the relationship between the actual landscape and the literary image of Wessex in Hardy's major novels which examines the ways in which Hardy uses and manipulates the 'real' world of Dorset to create a diversity of settings. His study traces the development of Wessex and the contribution of setting in each of the novels. Andrew Enstice, Thomas Hardy: Landscapes of the Mind (London: Macmillan, 1979).

the Wessex novels under the title "Novels of Character and Environment." While Hardy did not, as Page notes, "set great store by the categories he devised,"[4] this title reflects the significance of these elements in these novels and the relationship between the two. "Environment" is a rather vague description but an apt one, given the changing face of Wessex in each of the three novels. Although these works emphasize that character is fate, the environment also plays a role in shaping destiny in one's relationship to the social setting. But environment is also appropriate to the material world, properties, and possessions which surround the characters in their domestic lives.

Barbara Hardy points out that "[e]ver since Fielding designed an appropriate dwelling for Allworthy in Tom Jones, the houses in fiction have been carefully planned and furnished."[5] She notes that Fielding's principles of comic irony shaped Allworthy's house, but he drew upon places near his birthplace as sources for his imagery. Like Fielding, Hardy drew upon places he had known to give shape to the buildings of Wessex. In the tradition of appropriate habitations, Hardy's selective judgement combined with imagination transforms and creates properties and possessions which suggest much about the lives associated with them.

In Henry James's The Portrait of a Lady, Madame Merle lectures Isabel Archer, who has just said that she does not care about a suitor's house, on the fact that possessions do matter:

> 'When you have lived as long as I you'll see that every human being has his shell and that you must take the shell into account. By the shell I mean the whole envelope of

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[4]Page 37.

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[5]Barbara Hardy, A Reading of Jane Austen (London: Peter Owen, 1975) 136-7. She notes that Allworthy's house is "dangerously grand, suspiciously eloquent, an ideal environment for an ideal or idealizing occupant."

> circumstances. There's no such thing as an isolated man or woman; we're each of us made up of some cluster of appurtenances. What shall we call our "self"? Where does it begin? Where does it end? It overflows into everything that belongs to us--and then it flows back again.... One's self--for other people--is one's expression of one's self; and one's house, one's furniture, one's garments, the books one reads, the company one keeps--these things are all expressive.'[4]

Madame Merle's rhetorical questions about the shell of self are pertinent to the evolution of Hardy's tragic vision as revealed in Native and Jude through major characters for whom it is increasingly difficult to find the security and enrichment of an ideal home which is expressive of self.

In Madding Crowd, there is a harmonious continuity between owner and abode, a felicitous union of character and environment, both domestic and social, in houses which are vividly and concretely realized. Not as fully described in Native, houses are given less emphasis as being expressive of self and community. Residences are isolated shells belonging to people who have little to do with each other and are often absorbed by their individual needs and desires, which are expressed in a greater diversity of things and which often reach beyond the walls of home and beyond the social setting. The disappearance of house as expressive of self is rendered in Jude in generalized descriptions which express the social world. In his pilgrimage to find a meaningful life, Jude suffers the gradual shrinking of his shell as he casts off possessions which do not express his self or is forced to part with possessions which are rich in family history. He becomes an isolated man, alienated from the social world and nearly devoid of shell, a cluster of appurtenances which expresses his individuality. Hardy plays with creating appropriate habitations, making

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[4]Henry James, The Portrait of a Lady (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1981) 216.

them in varying degrees expressive of the individuality of his characters in their social worlds and embodying his increasingly pessimistic vision of home.

II. Far from the Madding Crowd: That Young Lady-Farmer's Property

In Far from the Madding Crowd, Hardy pays tribute to a world of continuity and stability in which rural values flourish despite pressures from the changing world of urban commercialism and threats of instability from within the farm world. The characters have the option to become or are established in a relatively stable country village with a history of permanence. Much has been made of Hardy's use of buildings in this novel to convey a sense of the community. C. J. P. Beatty, for instance, identifies a "powerful quartet of functional buildings" (manor house, old church, Warren's malthouse, and great barn) which "stand foursquare against the heady blandishments of Bath, the fuddlesome temptations of the Buck's Head, the poverty of the Union workhouse, and the ephemeral uncertainties of circus life (the sheep fair)."[1] Andrew Enstice argues that the focus is on the farming community, particularly on the agricultural side of Bathsheba's life. He sees an inanimate trio of functional buildings: Warren's Malthouse, Bathsheba's farmhouse, and the barn. Enstice calls attention to the specificity of details in the physical structures making them symbols of agrarian life.[2] The rural agrarian way of life is made palpable through Hardy's richly emblematic use of functional buildings. Descriptions of buildings emphasize, through either exterior physicality or the life of their interiors, their function in the life of the community. However, the full "inside-out" treatment is accorded to the inanimate trio. Warren's Malthouse and Bathsheba's farmhouse and barn are given extensive

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[1]C. J. P. Beatty, "Far from the Madding Crowd: A Reassessment," Hardy and the Modern World, ed. F. B. Pinion (Dorchester: Thomas Hardy Society, 1974) 20.

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[2]Andrew Enstice, Thomas Hardy: Landscapes of the Mind (London: Macmillan Press, 1979) 49-52.

descriptions which call attention to their physical structure as well as the life of the interior. This trio embodies the values of functional simplicity, necessity and adaptation which run like a refrain through the material world of Weatherburians. Each description links man with material, for the buildings are both extensions of the occupants in their present function in the life of the community, and extensions of the past.

But buildings are properties which, like other possessions, are part of the calculated way in which Hardy defines the individuality of the characters and conveys a sense of the characters' assimilation of the rural way of life. Possessions in Far from the Madding Crowd are really quite ordinary things: furniture, books, clothing, and clocks, as well as houses. Properties and possessions, in the recurring pattern of things, are socially as well as individually expressive. The possessions are capable of being imprinted with one's personality as soon as purchased:

> Bathsheba's sugar, tea, and drapery parcels... express[ed] in some indescribable manner, by their colour, shape and general lineaments, that they were that young lady-farmer's property, and the grocer's and draper's no more.[3]

Through "colour, shape, and general lineaments," possessions are particularized to express the individuality of the characters.

Although the barn is the property of Bathsheba, it functions as the strongest image of the community. The barn receives a full description which calls attention to the stability, beauty, and function of its structural details: vast porches, stone arches, chestnut roof, walls with striding buttresses, and lancet windows. Its "simplicity was

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[3]Thomas Hardy, Far from the Madding Crowd, ed. Ronald Blythe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978) 142. Future references are to this edition.

the origin of grandeur" (195). The barn is an imposing edifice on the landscape, but its magnitude is largely derived from the harmony it represents between present function and original purpose. In a world in which how firmly one treads on the ground says much about character, floors summon the past. The wooden threshing-floor has become beautiful through man's labour:

> [The floor is] formed of thick oak, black with age and polished by the beating of flails for many generations, till it had grown as slippery and as rich in hue as the state-room floors of an Elizabethan mansion. Here the shearers knelt, the sun slanting in upon their bleached shirts, tanned arms, and the polished shears they flourished.... Beneath them a captive sheep lay panting... (196)

The simplicity of the shearers in their labours creates a picture within its structural frame which is an image both of the present and of the past in its continuous tradition:

> In comparison with cities, Weatherbury was immutable. The citizen's Then is the rustic's Now.... Five decades hardly modified the cut of the gaiter, the embroidery of a smock-frock, by the breadth of a hair. Ten generations failed to alter the turn of a single phrase....
>
> So the barn was natural to the shearers, and the shearers were in harmony with the barn. (196)

Unlike either "the church or the castle," the barn is, as Enstice notes, a symbol of functional continuity in a world of changing economic, social, and spiritual values.[4]

While the barn's ornamentation cannot be separated from its functional aspect, Bathsheba's farmhouse is an old manorial hall of the "early stage of Classic Renaissance":

> Fluted pilasters, worked from solid stone, decorated its front, and above the roof chimneys were panelled or columnar, some coped gables with finials and like features still retaining traces of their Gothic extraction. (121)

Here the emphasis is on ornamentation which, while not superfluous to

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[4]Enstice 51.

the manor hall in its day, is not vital to the current function of farmhouse for a tenant farmer. Indeed, "the vital principles of the house had turned round inside the body to face the other way" (121). It seems appropriate that the building's adaptation for farming purposes should cause a reversal away from the ornamental side in a community in which the superfluous is suspect.[5] While the barn's floor has become beautiful with age, the floors of Bathsheba's farmhouse convey the worn state of her home:

> [T]he floors...have a very irregular surface, rising to ridges, sinking into valleys; and being just now uncarpeted, the face of the boards was seen to be eaten into innumerable vermiculations. (122)

The changed status of the building implies a change in the social and economic context of the community; however, as Enstice indicates, its adaptation for a use still linked to the land attests to a continuity born of necessity in man's agrarian pursuits.[6] The farmhouse is symbolic of necessary change and adaptation.

Just as there is a harmony between the shearers and the barn, so too is there a correlation between Bathsheba and her abode. All her "features of consequence [are] severe and regular"; she has a "classically-formed face, correct proportions, and highly finished features" (67). The descriptors are equally applicable to her house, but the congruity is more than skin deep. In assuming the tenancy left to her by her uncle, Bathsheba must come to terms with all that is implied in the house. Ronald Blythe points out that the "house still carries with it the overtones of old style power [which] reflect upon Bathsheba

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[5]Two of the church's waterspouts are considered superfluous by the church fathers, who block them up.

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[6]Enstice 50.

like the glimmerings of a worn-out faith towards which gestures of respect are still made."[7] She is a decorative addition to the community, but she accepts her social responsibility, giving ample proof that she is a shrewd businesswoman, and giving the lie to objections raised on the score of her age and sex. However, the pay-day scene hints at the problems to come:

> Perhaps her air was the inevitable result of the social rise which had advanced her from a cottage to a large house and fields. The case is not unexampled in high places. When...Jove and his family are found to have moved from their cramped quarters on the peak of Olympus into the wide sky above it, their words show a proportionate increase of arrogance and reserve. (131)

As Madame Merle remarks, the self flows into our possessions and then flows back again. Bathsheba's social rise, combined with her vanity and pride, produces Squire Bathsheba, the Queen of the cornmarket. Hardy calls Bathsheba's farmhouse her "bower," which, as Blythe indicates, "suggests a woman's intimate abode."[8] The maturity of Bathsheba is achieved, as Irving Howe argues, through learning to "adjust her strong sexual vanity to the requirements of social existence, and in this novel those requirements are not called into question."[9] Bathsheba's maturity strikes a balance between her individual passion and her social responsibility--a balance which allows her to come to terms with the notion that her house is a farmhouse, not simply a manor house "resounding of old style and power," nor exclusively her "bower." The farmhouse reflects change and adaptation within the context of the community and in terms of Bathsheba's maturity and her assimilation of

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[7]Ronald Blythe, Introduction, Far from the Madding Crowd, by Thomas Hardy (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978) 25.

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[8]Blythe 13.

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[9]Irving Howe, Thomas Hardy (1967; London: Macmillan, 1985) 53.

the rural way of life.

The revelation of Bathsheba's character is intimately tied to her possessions from her first appearance in the novel as she sits atop an "ornamental spring wagon, painted yellow and gaily marked," surrounded by her household goods and admiring herself in the mirror. The scene is witnessed by Gabriel, who concludes that she is vain. And as Millgate points out, the episode, one of several, takes on an emblematic quality, foreshadowing future events:

> [I]t hints at that display of feminity in the open air which will cause such damage when Bathsheba takes over Weatherbury Upper Farm and, not least, at that element of domesticity in her which Gabriel himself will finally discover.[10]

Upon assuming the tenancy, Bathsheba must make the farmhouse her own. Her acquisitions soon preoccupy the imaginations of the locals, who duly inventory her holdings:

> 'I wonder what a farmer-woman can want with a harpsichord, dulcimer, pianner, or whatever 'tis they d'call it?'
> ....
> 'Ay, seems her old uncle's things were not good enough for her. She've bought all but everything new. There's heavy chairs for the stout, weak and wiry ones for the slender; great watches getting to the size of clocks...'
> 'Pictures, for the most part wonderful frames.'
> 'And long horse-hair settles for the drunk, with horse-hair pillows at each end.... Likewise looking-glasses for the pretty, and lying books for the wicked.' (155)

The cumulative effect humorously highlights their appreciation of the material world--form denotes function and functionality is a prime concern. However, we are enticed to see what the locals do not fully comprehend: that Bathsheba's possessions are intimately linked to the expression of self. When proposing to Bathsheba, Gabriel had offered to buy her a piano in a few years as "farmers' wives are getting to have

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[10]Michael Millgate, Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist (London: Bodley Head, 1971) 83.

pianos now." The second-hand piano, like her other acquisitions, reflects her status, but her possessions also convey much more: her interest in music, cultural refinement, and romantic nature, as well as her vanity. Stowing in boxes her uncle's books, she fills her library with works of a lighter tone which, after the disappearance of Troy, are a measure of her ability to cope with adversity and maintain her capacity for romance. Living in a "state of barricade" in the attic, Bathsheba asks Liddy to bring some of her uncle's old books:

> A faint gleam of humour passed over [Bathsheba's] face as she said: 'Bring Beaumont and Fletcher's Maid's Tragedy; and the Mourning Bride; and--let me see--Night Thoughts [on Life, Death and Immortality], and the Vanity of Human Wishes.
>
> 'And that story of the black man, who murdered his wife Desdemona? It is a nice dismal one that would suit you excellent just now.'
>
> '...How do you know it would suit me? It wouldn't suit me at all.'
>
> 'But if the others do--'
>
> 'No, they don't; and I won't read dismal books. Why should I read dismal books, indeed? Bring me Love in a Village, and the Maid of the Mill, and Doctor Syntax, and some volumes of the Spectator.' (367)

In the chapter "Sortes Sanctorum--The Valentine," Bathsheba's possessions become instruments of fate in her romantic folly. Her appreciation of the Bible and Key as fortune-telling devices places her in the continuum of experience:

> A rusty patch immediately upon the verse, caused by previous pressure of an iron substance thereon, told that this was not the first time the old volume had been used for the purpose [to determine one's spouse]. (145)

But it is her romantic nature combined with her vanity which produces devastating results as the name of the Farmer Boldwood persistently crops up in Liddy's comments. The episode is a game for Bathsheba: she proposes to toss the hymn book as the decisive measure in determining the recipient of the valentine and selects the appropriate seal.

Rejecting the unicorn head and two doves, Bathsheba opts for the seal with the motto "Marry me," a most unfortunate choice. The message she conveys to Boldwood is not the frivolous and teasing come-on she intends, but the literal message of the motto. The valentine, an emblem of Bathsheba's romantic folly and of her need to be admired, places her in an awkward relationship with Boldwood, as it becomes a liability in his emotional blackmail to obtain her hand in marriage. One of several incidents in which Bathsheba must learn to take responsibility for her private conduct, the valentine is a painful object lesson in her education and developing maturity.

The lock of Fanny's hair, like the valentine, is another possession which plays an integral part in Bathsheba's education, providing another painful object lesson in vanity and her romantic errors. Demanding to know whose hair it is, Bathsheba is also interested in the owner's beauty. Troy taunts her into jealousy:

> 'Why her hair has been admired by everybody who has seen her since she has worn it loose, which has not been long. It is beautiful hair. People used to turn their heads to look at it, poor girl!' (331-2)

Discovering the reported beauty of a rival who has supplanted her in her husband's affections is a cruel blow, but Bathsheba's espial of the lock of hair in Troy's watch begins a sequence of events which is more devastating as she recognizes the folly of her hasty marriage to Troy. Receiving Troy's belongings after his supposed drowning, Bathsheba begins to enact what Troy would not do:

> She opened the case [of the watch] as he had opened it before her a week ago. There was the little coil of pale hair which had been as the fuse to this great explosion.
> ...'I am nothing to either of them, and why should I keep her hair?' She took it in her hand, and held it over the fire. 'No--I'll not burn it--I'll keep it in memory of her, poor thing!' (389)

Unlike Troy, to whom "memories were an encumbrance... considering and caring for what was before his eyes" (219), Bathsheba has the ability to care for the past and the capacity to learn from her mistakes. She keeps the hair as a symbol of Fanny's plight, but in Fanny's symbol is an emblem of her own plight in Troy's neglect and abuse and her unfulfilled romantic desires. Bathsheba's house is a symbol of change and necessary adaptation and is appropriate to Bathsheba's ability to adapt to her changing circumstances, to withstand the turbulence of her private life, and, thus, to mature.

The last of the inanimate trio is Warren's Malthouse. The description is succinct, stressing the functional simplicity of design, which is precisely what is required to contain the malting operation and the maltster's abode: old walls, thatched roof, small wooden lantern with louvre boards, small square window in a single door. Unlike Bathsheba's farmhouse, Warren's is not decorative by design, for the only ornamentation is the abundant growth of ivy which inwraps the old walls. Nor ~~is~~ it, like the barn, wealthy in materials and an imposing edifice in its historical context. However, its magnitude is derived from its human associations in the present life of the community as a clubhouse for the workfolk of the Everdine and Boldwood farms. At Warren's, the texture of the floor is the texture of life associated with it:

> The room inside was lighted only by the ruddy glow from the kiln mouth, which shone over the floor with the streaming horizontality of the setting sun, and threw upwards the shadows of all facial irregularities in those assembled around. The stone-flag floor was worn into a path from the doorway to the kiln, and into undulations everywhere. (102)

Emphasis is given to the groove worn by the many feet of the workfolk who have gathered around the warm glow of the kiln in their leisure

hours and by the generations of the maltsters attending the kiln. Warren's is, as Enstice claims, a symbol of the need for human companionship,[11] but also of the harmonious union of work and fellowship and of necessary adaptation.

Again Hardy plays with creating an appropriate habitation, making the malthouse expressive of the individuality of the maltster. The building is "inwrapped with ivy," while the maltster's "frosty white hair and beard [are] overgrowing his gnarled figure like the grey moss and lichen upon the leafless apple tree" (102). The natural imagery stresses the association between the natural world and the maltster--whose life "pedigree" is the farm work he has done and the places he has lived in--and emphasizes the aged nature of both building and occupant. Age is not viewed with disdain in Madding Crowd, but given a place of honour by the fact of survival and continued usefulness. The malthouse as a symbol of necessary adaptation is appropriate for the maltster "who, when the malting season from October to April had passed, made himself useful upon any of the bordering farmsteads" (197).

The "organic relatedness"[12] between maltster and house extends to his most prized possession, "the God-forgive-me cup":

> [I]t was rather furred with extraneous matter about the outside, especially in the crevices of the handles, the innermost curves of which may not have seen daylight for several years by reason of this encrustation thereon--formed of ashes accidentally wetted with cider and baked hard; but to the mind of any sensible drinker the cup was no worse for that, being incontestably clean on the inside and about the rim. (104)

And so Hardy cautions us about appearances and controls our judgment. In the Life, Hardy writes "that the beauty of association is entirely

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[11]Enstice 51.

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[12]Bruce Johnson, True Correspondence: A Phenomenology of Thomas Hardy's Novels (Tallahassee: UP of Florida, 1983) 22.

superior to the beauty of aspect, and a beloved relative's old battered tankard to the finest Greek vase."[13] The cup is the equivalent of the "battered tankard" in which Hardy persuades us to see the "beauty in ugliness."[14] But there is also beauty in the simplicity of the maltster's way of life:

> A curved settle of unplaned oak stretched along one side, and in a remote corner was a small bed and bedstead... (102)

The kiln is the focal point of the room, with the maltster's domestic necessities unobtrusively placed out of the way. The rural values of simplicity, functionality, and adaptation are made concrete in the maltster's method of food consumption:

> [Bread and bacon were] eaten on the plateless system, which is performed by placing a slice of bread upon the table, the meat flat upon the bread, a mustard plaster upon the meat, and a pinch of salt upon the whole, then cutting them vertically downwards with a large pocket-knife until wood is reached, when the severed lump is impaled on the knife, elevated, and sent the proper way of food. (153)

Although Hardy's use of the word "proper" betrays a more refined sensibility, the method is delightful in its utterly functional simplicity. As is typical of Hardy's schematic method of revealing the differences between his characters, Bathsheba is reported to have drunk cider through "a strawmote, and not in a nateral way at all" (423). The expression of the oneness between self and shell is made vivid in Bathsheba's refined use of a straw and the maltster's, to use Pennyways' phrase, more "nateral way" of approaching his food.

The copious descriptive treatment which this trio of buildings is accorded makes the absence of exterior description for Boldwood's house

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[13]Florence Emily Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy, 1840-1928 (London: Macmillan, 1962) 120-21.

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[14]Life 121.

conspicuous. Enstice argues that it is characteristic of Hardy to allow the description of one building to extend to others of a similar kind; therefore, the description of Bathsheba's property extends to Boldwood's. Since, as Enstice claims, the emphasis is on Bathsheba's farm, a description of Boldwood's house is of little consequence.[11] Nor does Boldwood's house fit into Beatty's scheme of buildings which "stand foursquare" against the instabilities of the world beyond Weatherbury. While it is true that the emphasis is on Bathsheba's life, Boldwood's house is used as a location for several scenes in the novel. The absence of exterior description for Boldwood's house is an ominous sign, a foreshadowing, given the schematics of Hardy's descriptions of buildings. In Weatherbury, shape is given to buildings which are emblems of stability and permanence and which embody, through the life of their interiors and as extensions of the occupants, the fact and value of rural life.

While Hardy does not build a house for Boldwood, there is an odd continuity between Boldwood and what we are given. Boldwood's house remains a shadowy structure which is not given a full descriptive treatment of its facade. Of the physical exterior features we are told nothing, except that the house "stood recessed from the road" (171), another ominous sign, as the pauper's graveyard and the Buck's Head Inn are also recessed from the road and also hidden from sight. Hardy foreshadows Boldwood's instability and the potential danger that he poses to the community, but he also creates a sense of ambiguity about Boldwood's character. In lieu of a description of Boldwood's house, Hardy simply states that "Boldwood was tenant of what was called Little

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[11]Enstice 50.

Weatherbury Farm, and his person was the nearest approach to aristocracy that this remoter quarter of the parish could boast of" (170). But he goes on to create a sense of ambiguity by contrasting the impressions of the workfolk, who see the magnitude of Boldwood in their farm world, and the impressions of "genteel strangers," who would see "only Mr. Boldwood." Such details, rather than a description of his house, become a part of the unreconciled contradictions and incongruities in Boldwood's character:

> Nobody knew entirely [Boldwood's character]; for though it was possible to form guesses concerning his wild capabilities from old floodmarks faintly visible, he had never been seen at the high tides which caused them. (171-72)

It is Boldwood's body which is, as Hardy states, "the shell, or the tablet, of his soul" (172).

In his suits of grey, Boldwood is a "dark and silent shape" (171):

> [A] gentlemanly man, with full and distinctly Roman features.... He was erect in attitude, and quiet in demeanour. One characteristic pre-eminently marked him--dignity. (141)

Boldwood is a man of violent passion whose equilibrium depends upon the repression of his passion. It is never made entirely clear what was the original cause of his repression, nor does it matter. What preoccupies our vision of him is the transformation of the dignified Boldwood into a sexually obsessed man holding the smoking gun. His transformation brings self-absorption and threatens the stability of farm life as he neglects his farm as well as his dignity. The distance between Boldwood and the rural world is made clear by his insistence on bringing the cash nexus into his associations with Bathsheba, Gabriel, and Troy in a world "where calculation is confined to market days" (243). The lack of structural integrity and definition of Boldwood's house is linked to the lack of integrity at its centre--integrity which Gabriel possesses,

Bathsheba gains, and the workfolk often humorously exhibit.

With Boldwood, Hardy demonstrates what happens to people who live too much in the world of objects. Bathsheba, Gabriel, and Boldwood are cut off from family ties, but Bathsheba and Gabriel gain the support of the human community. The life-sustaining defensive walls which Boldwood has built around himself are inhospitable barriers. His horse stable is his "almonry and cloister" where among living creatures he can feel charitable. Without the benefit of family or community ties, Boldwood dramatizes the effects of isolation and self-absorbing passion. In the valentine episode, the contents of Boldwood's parlour create a striking contrast to those of Bathsheba's parlour, where all is imbued with romance and frivolity:

> Boldwood sat down to supper as usual by a beaming fire of aged logs. Upon the mantel-shelf before him was a time-piece surmounted by a spread eagle, and upon the eagle's wings was the letter Bathsheba had sent. (149)

As indicators of his wealth, Boldwood's aged logs and clock, like his "unimpeachable breed of horse," are the evidence that he is the "nearest approach to aristocracy" in Weatherbury, but they are also emblematic of his sombre nature. The valentine's seal is a serious matter as it "assumes the tone" of Boldwood's appurtenances and becomes a part of his pretentious claim to wed Bathsheba. Hardy shows how the material world is given meaning according to the bias of individual needs and desires.

Hardy dwells on the necessity of creature comforts for both man and animals. Houses are capable of being reoccupied; homes are nests which the characters create from the inside. Since they do not have houses put up for them, they must assimilate them to their purposes and accommodate to the conditions offered. While Gabriel's shepherd's hut, the ark on wheels, is only a small, functional structure, it is a

congenial domicile in fulfilling the requirements of his needs in caring for his lambs:

> The little speck of life he placed on a wisp of hay before the small stove, where a can of milk was simmering.... A rather hard couch, formed of a few corn sacks thrown carelessly down, covered half the floor of this little habitation and here [Oak fell instantly asleep].
>
> The inside of the hut... was cosy and alluring.... In the corner stood the sheep-crook, and along a shelf at one side were ranged bottles and canisters of the simple preparations pertaining to ovine surgery and physic; spirits of wine, turpentine, tar, magnesia, ginger, and castor-oil being the chief. On a triangular shelf across the corner stood bread, bacon, cheese, and a cup for ale or cider, which was supplied from a flagon beneath. Beside the provisions lay the flute. (60-61)

Houses, like nests, are bastions against the environment. Boldwood and Bathsheba make nature serve their houses, but Gabriel's hut, like the malthouse which becomes his shepherd's hut in Weatherbury, serves nature and is an extension of the ewes' shelters:

> Detached hurdles thatched with straw were struck into the ground at various scattered points, amid and under which the whitish forms of his meek ewes moved and rustled. (60)

Yet it is also an extension of Gabriel's home. Adaptability is a housing requirement in rural life as well as a necessary attribute for occupants. Gabriel's hut is the first abode encountered in the novel and becomes a measure, as does Gabriel, by which all other houses and characters can be judged. Gabriel's well-stocked shelves are indicative of his character, but also suggestive of the appropriate balance and harmony between work and domestic life and a modicum of pleasure necessary in the rural way of life. Integrity of character, wholeness and completeness, as well as honesty, are the only real protection, imbuing a home with safeguards to withstand adversity.

The hut represents a convenient solution to the problem of creature comforts in a shepherd's life; however, it becomes an

inconvenient domicile when Gabriel, in his desire for additional warmth, leaves the vents closed. The hut is an inconvenience when Gabriel's carelessness is found out by the object of his desire, Bathsheba. He renounces the hut, claiming that he will sell it and sit under a thatched hurdle, for it "played [him] nearly the same trick the other day" (70). Dramatically, Hardy shows desires can make one deny or change old habits. Gabriel began to "like saying 'Bathsheba' as a private enjoyment instead of whistling; he turned his taste to black hair, though he had sworn by brown since he was a boy, and isolated himself until the space he filled in the public eye was contemptibly small" (74). But he does not sell his hut, for he recognizes that the fault was his, and that it is also a convenient post from which to watch Bathsheba the milkmaid. More importantly, Gabriel does not forsake his way of life in the pursuit of his desires. Ian Gregor points out:

> Oak is enabled to come to terms with his feelings in a way which neither Boldwood nor Troy can achieve, because he can find in the obduracy of work ... a self- forgetfulness, a wise passiveness.... It is the impersonality of work, together with the support of the human community it necessarily requires, which Hardy uses as the counterpoint to the isolating self-absorption of passion.[14]

Unlike Boldwood, who neglects his husbandry as he pursues Bathsheba, and Troy, who only goes haymaking for pleasure or ignores farm matters, Gabriel is steadfast in his attentions to his agrarian duties. His responsiveness to Bathsheba is, as Gregor also indicates, intimately linked to his agrarian skills.

With the exception of the hut in Norcombe and Bathsheba's farmhouse, Gabriel's residences are not fully described. His homes are a measure of his economic status and emblematic of his values and desires.

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[14]Ian Gregor, The Great Web: The Form of Hardy's Major Fiction (London: Faber, 1974) 56.

Unlike more elaborate domiciles which adversely affect the residents, making them acutely aware of self, the simplicity of Gabriel's way of life is part of the self-forgetfulness and wise passivity which enable him to succeeed. He is a man who can enjoy the luxury of a bed, but for whom the small wagon outside the Buck's Head can be a temporary abode:

> Eating his last slices of bread and ham, and drinking from the bottle of cider he had taken the precaution to bring with him, he got into the lonely wagon. Here he spread half of the hay as a bed... pulled the other half over him by way of bed-clothes, covering himself entirely, and feeling, physically, as comfortable as ever he had in his life.... So thinking of his misfortunes, amorous and pastoral, he fell asleep. (91)

His resilience and ability to adapt to new situations are aptly caught in his simple nest-making and the ease with which he finds sleep. His changes of residence, from Jan Coggan's house, to a home of his own for want of more space, and ultimately to Bathsheba's farmhouse, become a part of what Millgate describes as "the recurrent demonstrations of Gabriel's resourcefulness [which] sustain and expand the sense of him as a man of parts as well as of integrity."[17] Although he changes his residences and is able to regain financial stability in Weatherbury, Gabriel does not change his way of life:

> Some were beginning to consider Oak a 'near' man, for though his condition had thus far improved, he lived in no better style than before, occupying the same cottage, paring his own potatoes, mending his stockings, and sometimes even making his bed with his own hands.... [Oak was] a man who clung persistently to old habits and usages, simply because they were old, [but] there was room for doubt as to his motives. (392)

Gabriel's wise passivity in his dogged loyalty to Bathsheba as well as to Boldwood and the simplicity of his life, despite the wages he receives from each, make it seem, as Millgate points out, entirely proper that Gabriel should marry Bathsheba and take over Boldwood's

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[17]Millgate 94.

farm, for the "two achievements are, in fact, splendidly one."[18] It is also appropriate that Gabriel should move into Bathsheba's farmhouse, the symbol of necessary adaptation:

> [I]t had been arranged that Farmer Oak should go there to live, since he had as yet neither money, house, nor furniture worthy of the name, though he was on a sure way towards them, whilst Bathsheba was, comparatively, in a plethora of all these. (463-4)

Material considerations are a matter of practicality, and the unconscious leader of the community is rewarded for his virtue.

Differences between Gabriel and Troy are aptly brought out in the different ways they respond to Bathsheba's farmhouse. Whereas Gabriel sees "a nice old house" (295), Troy sees "a rambling gloomy house" and feels "like new wine in an old bottle." Seeing what he imagines to be flaws or inadequacies in the house, Troy proclaims his plan for renovation:

> 'My notion is that sash-windows should be put throughout, and these wainscoted walls brightened up a bit; or the oak cleared quite away, and the walls papered.... "Creation and preservation don't do well together".... I am for making the place more modern, that we may be cheerful whilst we can.' (295)

Within the context of Weatherbury and its slowness to change, Troy's plan for improvements seems drastic and foreshadows his destructive potential, but it is also a part of the recurrent demonstrations of his trivializing nature. When Gabriel attempts to advise him of the impending storm and the danger to the ricks, Troy sends the message that he cannot talk about such "fidgets" (199). Nor does he take steps to protect them. Unconcerned for the preservation of the agrarian way of life with its functional simplicity and necessary adaptation, Troy simply promotes the preservation of his way of life. For him, there can

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[18]Millgate 94.

be no harmonious union of work and domestic life. He is his banal recitation, to "be cheerful whilst we can," living only in the present.

When Bathsheba rejects Gabriel's first marriage proposal, she advises him that to be prudent he ought to "marry a woman with money," who could stock a larger farm (81). But when Gabriel does "marry a woman with money," he does not do so with such opportunistic aims. His concern with material wealth is a practical consideration, the provision of creature comforts and gaining the appropriate social status to wed Bathsheba. But Gabriel moves into Bathsheba's house because he loves her. Troy is the opportunist for whom material considerations are the important ones. After his desertion of Bathsheba, Troy begins to find his life coarse as money runs short. Resolving to return to Bathsheba's home, Troy has second thoughts:

> [H]ow could he endure existence with a spirited wife to whom at first entering he could be beholden for food and lodging? Moreover, it was not at all unlikely that his wife would fail at her farming, if she had not already done so; and he would then become liable to her maintenance... (400)

But Troy's close proximity to Bathsheba at Greenhill inflames his desire, making his return sure.[19]

Clothing is a kind of residence, the first shell by which a human being protects himself from the environment. Always on display, clothing is a most conspicuous possession, more personal than a house--hence, the most readily available means of particularizing individuals. As Millgate observes,

> [M]inute discriminations of dress ... are important in the world

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[19]Hillis Miller argues that distance and desire are two themes which are woven throughout Hardy's work: "distance as the source of desire and desire as the energy behind attempts to turn distance into closeness." One version of these themes is in the relationship between lovers. Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 1970) xii.

> of Far from the Madding Crowd ... and can be made so readily in communities where a substantial wardrobe is unknown and where 'five decades hardly modified the cut of the gaiter, the embroidery of a smock-frock, the breadth of a hair.'[20]

The smock-frocked folk are meagerly individualized by dress preserving the collective nature of the group:

> Some were as usual, in snow white smock-frocks of Russiaduck, and some in whitey-brown ones of drabbet--marked on the wrists, breasts, backs and sleeves with honey-comb work. (126)

Their style of dress has a history of continuity because of its eminently functional role as part of the social identity, alerting potential employers to their skills. The continuity of style suggests its usefulness in fulfilling the unchanging requirements of practicality and comfort. Gabriel's relationship to the working world is established in the opening page:

> Oak's appearance in his old clothes was peculiarly his own... He wore a low-crowned felt hat, spread out at the base by tight jamming upon the head for security in high winds, and a coat like Dr. Johnson's; his lower extremities being encased in ordinary leather leggings and boots emphatically large, affording to each foot a roomy apartment so constructed that the wearer might stand in the river all day long and know nothing of the damp. (51-52)

In describing his clothes as "peculiarly his own," Hardy implies that Gabriel's dress is subtly different from that of other workfolk, who in cold weather wear great-coats over their smock-frocks. What is unique about Gabriel's coat, like Dr. Johnson's, is the many pockets. As a mini-residence, Gabriel's coat is stocked with necessities: the provisions he leaves Norcombe with; in Weatherbury during lambing, a teapot for feeding lambs, a tarpot for marking them, and the flute to beguile a lonely hour. It is appropriate that Gabriel's work clothes should be like, but not conforming to, the workfolk's clothes, as

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[20]Millgate 91.

Millgate points out, because he operates "happily within the malthouse group without ever being entirely of it."[21] Gabriel embraces the values of the workaday world--practicality, simplicity, and adaptability--but his enactment of these values and his skills set him apart and destine him for "better things."

In Norcombe, Gabriel has two modes of dress: casual old work clothes and fussy ornate. The disparity between Gabriel's daily dress and his cultured idea of "the carefully neat and carelessly ornate" is comic, but appropriate to Gabriel's youthful appreciation of his "envelope." Donning his best attire for his marriage proposal to Bathsheba, he betrays his youthful exuberance:

> He thoroughly cleaned his silver watch-chain with whiting, put new lacing straps to his boots, looked to the brass eyelet-holes, went to the inmost heart of the plantation for a new walking-stick,... took a handkerchief from the bottom of his clothes-box, put on the light waistcoat patterned all over with sprigs of an elegant flower uniting the beauties of both rose and lily without the defects of either, and used all the hair-oil he possessed... (74-75)

This mode of dress is Gabriel's badge of his newly acquired but not yet paid-for farmer status, creating a sense of the gulf between the workaday world which he is firmly part of and the farmer status he aspires towards. The floral pattern of his coat is rather ironic in that Gabriel is not an idealist. He hopes for success as a farmer and marriage to Bathsheba, but he is aware of his prospects for failure. Gabriel's movement from his modest elevation as pastoral king into "the slime pits of Siddim" (88) leaves him with "the clothes he stood up in and nothing more" (87).

In Weatherbury, Gabriel develops a different style of gentlemanly dress but never entirely forsakes his work clothes. As a barometer of

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[21]Millgate 90.

social advancement, his new clothing arouses comment:

> 'Whatever d'ye think?' said Susan Tall, 'Gabriel Oak is coming it quite the dand. He now wears shining boots with hardly a hob in 'em, two or three times a-week, and a tall hat 'a-Sundays, and a' hardly knows the name of smock-frock. When I see people strut enough to be cut up into bantam cocks, I stand dormant with wonder, and says no more!' (391)

His acquisition of clothes, like his desire for Boldwood's farm and for new chairs without hard wooden seats when Bathsheba comes to call, is linked to his desire for possessing the hand of Bathsheba in marriage. Although Susan testifies that Gabriel is becoming "the dand," he wears a plain great-coat for his marriage to Bathsheba. In developing his mature style of dress, Gabriel demonstrates his appreciation of his envelope as appropriate to his personality and his simple way of life and for what he intends it to convey about his social status.

Bathsheba's clothes are an intimate part of her personal history. The many stages of her life--milkmaid, farmer, lover, wife, widow, and bride of Gabriel--are marked by sartorial changes. As milkmaid, Bathsheba appears in a crimson jacket and long cape. When she becomes entangled with the yet unknown Troy's spur, she is the lady farmer:

> Bathsheba was revolving in her mind whether by a bold and desperate rush she could free herself at the risk of leaving her skirt bodily behind her. The thought was too dreadful. The dress--which she had put on to appear stately at the [shearing] supper--was the head and front of her wardrobe; not another in her stock became her so well. (216)

Her rationalization for remaining entangled beautifully argues the point that Bathsheba's clothes represent her vanity. Her clothing excesses are striking in a world where clothes matter more for practicality than style, colour, and material and contribute to the motif of excess which permeates the novel.

Bathsheba's sartorial excesses after assuming the tenancy of Weatherbury farm and until her marriage to Troy create a sense of the cultural gulfs between her and the Weatherburians. Yet, when put to the test, Bathsheba is a member of the workday world, but her refinement and social position as lady farmer keep her from being entirely of it. While such cultural gulfs are not insurmountable problems, Bathsheba's vanity is problematic in her relationship with her lovers. Running off to Bath after Troy, she is reported to have worn "a beautiful gold-colour silk gown trimmed with black lace, that would have stood alone 'ithout legs inside if required" (279). Bathsheba's love of clothes becomes a source of light humour and is a part of her charm.

The maturity of Bathsheba is punctuated by the plain apparel she dons for her marriage to Gabriel: "in a cloak that reached her clogs.... and having at Gabriel's request, arranged her hair this morning as she had worn it years ago on Norcombe Hill" (463). Adjusting her vanity to the requirements of social existence, Bathsheba changes her clothing style to one appropriate to the rural world. Gabriel's request and Bathsheba's compliance in her hairstyle constitute a poignant touch conveying much about their relationship and the maturity of Bathsheba. The strong-willed girl of Norcombe is able, like Gabriel, to achieve a wise passivity and self-forgetfulness. Hardy's description of Gabriel and Bathsheba on their way to church is of "a large and smaller umbrella" moving along the road. As simple mini-residences, the umbrellas are a felicitous metonymy for the couple as they walk arm-in-arm to be married.

Bathsheba's perception of Troy's appearance, "brilliant in brass and scarlet," is a fine touch in the spur entanglement scene, signalling

the beginning of her attraction to him. Troy's scarlet military jacket, like Bathsheba's crimson jacket, is a traditional colour signal for a passionate nature. But Troy's scarlet jacket comes to mean much more. Later, Bathsheba perceives a "spot of artificial red" (237) moving among the ferns. His momentary passion for her is not artificial, but does not develop into a love of a true and enduring kind. The description of the revelers' exiting of the barn depicts a demonic Troy:[22]

> ...all walking awkwardly, and abashed, save the foremost, who wore a red jacket, and advanced with his hands in his pockets, whistling. The others shambled after with a conscience-stricken air: the whole procession was not unlike Flaxman's group of suitors tottering on towards the infernal regions under the conduct of Mercury. (314)

Hardy's fiction contains subtleties and nuances of character which make explicit the fact that discriminations should and can be made.

In Madding Crowd, a preoccupation with dress and style signals absurdity and folly. The trivial Troy is concerned with appearances, but his appearance is not always deceptive:

> ...in a farmer's marketing suit of unusually fashionable cut was an erect, well-made young man.... [Troy] was gradually transforming himself into a farmer of a spirited and very modern school. People of unalterable ideas still insisted upon calling him 'Sergeant' when they met him, which was in some degree owing to his having still retained the well-shaped moustache of his military days, and the soldierly bearing inseparable from his form and training. (317)

Hardy grants that appearances are important, yet the personality of a character may transcend simple details such as clothing. As with Gabriel in his bailiff's garb at the hiring fair where people naturally call him "Sir," Troy's dress does not disguise his essence. Although Troy may don the apparel of his station, he is a farmer in clothes only, for, unlike Gabriel, he does not possess the skill or will to adapt to his

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[22]Gregor 70.

circumstances. The soldier with the winning tongue is a trickster whose clothing is often associated with deception. His gentleman farmer clothes are the material evidence of his drowning, while his costume for the role of Turpin and his cap and great coat with the collar turned up to his eyes allow for much dramatic irony as he returns from "death." For Boldwood, Troy is "the impersonator of Heaven's persistent irony" (438), who has played his part too well.

Boldwood receives little attention in matters of his dress. His suits of grey, like his household goods, are signs of a serious and sombre nature. But apropos of Boldwood's desire for Bathsheba, he dons his courting togs, a "cheerful style" new coat and white waistcoat for the shearing supper. Like Gabriel, who put much energy in his courting togs, Boldwood allows the tailor to fuss fastidiously over his new Christmas coat:

> Times had been when the farmer had exclaimed against all such niceties as childish, but now no philosophic or hasty rebuke whatever was provided by this man for attaching as much importance to a crease in the coat as to an earthquake in South America. (420)

Gabriel's attention to details of his dress is a normal youthful response. But the disparity between Boldwood's grey attire and his courting togs, like his secret cache of dresses, furs, and jewelry, packed and labelled "Bathsheba Boldwood" and each dated six years from the date of purchase, is a part of the precarious pattern of his psychological state and his excessive responses to his desire. When Boldwood puts his energies into sartorial matters, as indicative of the strength of his desires and his folly, he is most vulnerable. Although Gabriel "can't honestly say" that Boldwood was mad when he killed Troy, Troy's return and, more importantly, Bathsheba's anguish bring about the

crime of passion. The clothing for Bathsheba is correctly interpreted as a sign of his insanity, albeit temporary.

Clocks are an appropriate possession in a novel which progresses according to the country clock, the festivals and occupations of the agricultural year which, as Millgate notes, serve as backdrops for the various love entanglements.[23] Where Bathsheba is concerned, Boldwood's "soaring eagle" clock is an apt visual analogue for his passionate desire and his methods for procuring them. Like the predatory king of the air, Boldwood zeroes in on his target and swoops for the kill, concerned only with his gratification. But the image also suggests the destructive potential of his passion. Unlike Gabriel's patient waiting for Bathsheba, which is filled with beneficial and caring acts, Boldwood's waiting is agonizing:

> He would annihilate the six years of his life as if they were minutes--so little did he value his time on earth beside her love. He would let her see, all those six years of intangible ethereal courtship, how little care he had for anything but as it bore upon the consummation. (395)

As Blythe remarks, the middle aged Boldwood lags behind the season for love,[24] but once his passion has been fired he looks to the past, using it as emotional blackmail, and to the future, offering a lengthy engagement to achieve his demands.

The materialistic Troy realizes the incongruity between himself and the watch he possesses: "It is an unusually good one for a man like me to possess": a gold watch with a "coronet with five points, and beneath, Cedit amor rebus--'Love yields to circumstances'" (230). The motto is appropriate to Troy, who uses Fanny's lateness to jilt her and

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[23]Millgate 91.

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[24]Blythe 27.

her reappearance and death to reject his marriage to Bathsheba. Pointing out that his watch has a history, Troy proclaims that it "has regulated imperial interests in its time--the stately ceremonial, the courtly assignation, pompous travels, and lordly sleeps." But, ironically, Troy has no sense of history nor of time: "Simply feeling, considering and caring for what was before his eyes, he was vulnerable only in the present" (219). His attachment to the watch is as a patent of his nobility (231)--but his attachment is for the watch's associative value, as it reflects his class, rather than for its sentimental value as a relic of his father. The aristocratic connection is a telling clue to the gulfs between Troy and the rural world. Boldwood's connection to aristocracy is in his social standing, but he does participate for some time in the agricultural life of the community, whereas Troy's blood relationship and his insistence on that relationship create an insurmountable gulf, given his character. Moreover, Troy is a soldier who is, as Blythe points outs, the "military destroyer of the jogging rural time-scale."[25]

Gabriel's attachment to his "small silver clock" is appropriate to a man who "clung persistently to old habits and usages because they were old." A sentimentalist at heart, Gabriel is able to escape any evil consequences resulting from his defective timepiece by constant observation of the stars and by pressing his face to his neighbour's windows to peer at their clocks. Although his timepiece may be defective, Gabriel's understanding and sense of time are not. He is equipped with hindsight, foresight, and the ability to know precisely what to do at the right time. As Enstice points out, Gabriel's skills

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[25]Blythe 27.

are given greater weight than other aspects of practical life:

> But the skills which lead him at last to the tenancy of Little Weatherbury are a mixture of old and new--the trochar, and the moveable hut, and the mathematical calculations, mixed with the knowledge of stars and weather--which arises solely from the desire to work most efficiently at his job.[36]

But as Blythe observes, "[n]ot the least of the shepherd's assets is his rural understanding of time, his ability to wait."[37]

For Hardy, who habitually explores the nature of passion and love, house and home are recurrent images and issues. In Madding Crowd, home is a protective community where, through the assimilation of a way of life, residents can gain some security, stability and enrichment. Economic stability is derived from their agricultural pursuits; work is a common thread linking them together. But there is also the need for companionship and support which intimacy can provide. Emotional stability is promoted by the fulfillment of the need for fellowship, with the community as a source for that fellowship. Fellowship is often yoked to the consumption of food and drink and suggests that emotional and physical needs are elemental and of equal importance. However, as the unmarried Maryanne points out, to find any crooked, lame, or second-hand fellow "'twould do me more good than toast and ale" (203).

Maryanne senses the necessity of marriage and its contribution to emotional comfort, but her lament humorously suggests the fallacy that the act of marriage alone can provide fulfilling intimacy. In this novel, home is not emphasized by the importance of domestic ties over other social and spiritual ties, but rather by the importance of the right kind of domestic ties which Gabriel and Bathsheba are able to

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[36]Enstice 65.

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[37]Blythe 27.

achieve:

> Theirs was that substantial affection which arises (if any arises at all) when the two who are thrown together begin first by knowing the rougher sides of each other's character, and not the best till further on, the romance growing up in the interstices of hard prosaic reality. This godd-fellowship--camaraderie--usually occurring through the similarity of pursuits, is unfortunately seldom superadded to love between the sexes, because men and women associate, not in their labours, but in their pleasures merely. (458)

The novel ends on the hopeful note of their marriage because of the basic congruity which exists between them and their environment.

III. The Return of the Native: Six Miles Distant

"The opening chapter of The Return of the Native contains," as Andrew Enstice observes, "probably the most famous of all Hardy's descriptive prose":[1]

> A Saturday afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretches of whitish cloud shutting out the sky was a tent which had the whole heath for its floor.[2]

The opening chapter calls attention to the central role given to the natural world. Much has been made of Hardy's use of nature, yet his presentation of it has been a source of difficulty and criticism. According to Ian Gregor, the heath is routinely referred to as "the chief character of the novel"--a claim difficult to dispute if it is made as a way of registering the significance of the Heath as a presence throughout the novel.[3] Or, as Michael Millgate says,

> The difficulty about Egdon Heath is the way it perpetually threatens to move from background to foreground.... Hardy suggests in his 1912 Preface a link with the heath in King Lear; a closer analogy would be perhaps with the moors in Wuthering Heights. But the moors in Emily Bronte's novel, though no less powerfully realized, are kept in their inanimate place: they provide obstacles and problems, and characters may or may not have an affinity with them, yet in even so romantic a work they are not given the anthropomorphic elaborations of Egdon Heath.[4]

Millgate's criticism of Hardy's "anthropomorphic elaborations" is

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[1]Andrew Enstice, Thomas Hardy: Landscapes of the Mind (London: Macmillan Press, 1979) 78.

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[2]Thomas Hardy, The Return of the Native, ed. George Woodcock (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978) 53. Future references are from this edition.

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[3]Ian Gregor, The Great Web: The Form of Hardy's Major Fiction (London: Faber, 1974) 81.

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[4]Michael Millgate, Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist (London: Bodley Head, 1971) 131-32.

somewhat unfair, as Hardy clearly did not want to keep the heath in its "inanimate place." But, rather, Hardy wishes to use the opposition, the heath as inanimate presence and as animate presence, as a matter of perspective. Not one or the other, the heath is both.

One cannot help but be aware of the heath as living entity--a form which, as Enstice observes, "pulses with the life of myriad creatures and plants, and whose voice, through them, is the wind."[5] Between the floor of earth and roof of clouds, the image of the tent which Hardy evokes in the opening paragraph, resides a multitude of creatures and plants which gives the heath its vitality. The texture of the heath's natural world makes it distinct from the bordering arable lands: a vast natural shell, a "titanic form," enclosing its occupants and creating its own "envelope of circumstances," to use James's phrase. While Hardy does seem to flesh out that "character" Egdon Heath by bringing to the foreground a living entity replete with shell and cluster of appurtenances, he stops short of making Edgon Heath a character. As an animate presence, the heath is filled with living creatures which, like man, are tied to the earth in their struggle for survival. Vital, alive, and expressive of the individuality of the heath, the natural world gives physical texture and, when viewed from a distance, shape to the "titanic form." But the heath is an indifferent landscape and, as Gregor advises,

> We have continuously to keep in mind that whatever metaphysical airs blow across the Heath, whatever interest there may be in Hardy's speculation that it may be the Heath of that traditionary King of Wessex--Lear, Egdon is very much a tract of land, upon which people constantly walk, and have their houses, little more than pinpoints of light in an enveloping

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[5]Enstice 80.

darkness.[6]

Egdon Heath, like Weatherbury, is what Enstice calls an "enclosed landscape": a community defined by its geographic limitations, which is both self-centered and self-sufficient, and in which characters are presented in terms of their setting.[7] Enstice argues that in The Return of the Native, it is the heath which gives unity to the "scattered community." The heath does indeed provide some unity in the relationship between geography and tradition. The cycle of festivals which contributes to the pattern of the novel hark back to a primitive way of life. The shepherd's calendar of Far from the Madding Crowd is replaced by what George Woodcock calls "vestigial paganism," the Fifth of November bonfires, the heathmen's dance, and the May Day celebrations.[8] As Hardy remarks,

> [T]he impulses of all such outlandish hamlets are pagan still: in these spots homage to nature, self-adoration, frantic gestures, fragments of Teutonic rites to divinities whose names are forgotten, seem in some way or other to have survived mediaeval doctrines. (452)

Enstice points out that Hardy takes great care to create a sense of space in the distances between the cottages: Clym and Eustacia's cottage is "six miles distant" from Blooms-End (268); the Quiet Woman is too far from Blooms-End for the pregnant Thomasin to walk; and Mistover Knap is "far away up" the valley of the heath from the Quiet Woman (101). Enstice adds that distances are often vague and judged by the time it takes to walk; moreover, the precise location of houses is unimportant. The distances between habitations, as well as other points of reference,

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[6]Gregor 82.

[7]Enstice ix.

[8]George Woodcock, Introduction, The Return of the Native (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978) 26.

do give a sense of what Enstice calls "limitless heath," the unity of place and self-containment of this created landscape.[9] But the distances also convey the fragmented nature of this community. Characters are defined by their relationship to the heath and its limited community, but, more importantly, the major characters are individualized by their needs and desires which distance, isolate, or alienate them from others. Rather than a self-centered community, Egdon Heath is predominantly a scattered community of self-centered individuals.

Coming to The Return of the Native after Far from the Madding Crowd, one is struck by the lack of prominence given to buildings. Enstice attributes this to the central role given to nature:

> In every case, most emphasis is given to what lies around the houses, and the slight differences between them allow only enough scope to build up a composite picture of a representative heath dwelling. The picture is of a low, rambling, thatched house, surrounded--almost in defiance of the heath--by a sparse garden, and with ramshackle outbuildings and paddock.... Most strikingly, however, all these descriptions suggest a human habitation crouching at bay before the heath, unassertive in an environment that could so easily overwhelm it, yet maintaining its position only by an act of defiance.[10]

Similarly, Gregor argues that the little "pinpoints of light" on the landscape are emblematic of the tensions between the characters and their environment:

> 'Blooms-End', 'Mistover Knap', 'The Quiet Woman', these are the elegaic and sardonic addresses where much of the drama, however epic in scope and intention, is to be located; they are isolated habitations, precariously managing to distinguish themselves from the surrounding Heath. But, in fact, they do succeed... we feel the individual standing out starkly and stubbornly against the soft obliterations of the Heath. It is this tension between 'land' and 'character' which Hardy takes up at the outset of the novel.[11]

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[9]Enstice 76.

[10]Enstice 77-78.

[11]Gregor 82.

Hardy's descriptions of the domestic habitations add to the physical texture which characterizes Egdon Heath. Houses are the foci from which the characters act out the tragedies and convey tensions in the novel. But houses are also a part of the shell, the "cluster of appurtenances," expressing, through their "slight differences," the individuality of the owners.

Blooms-End is an appropriate habitation for Mrs. Yeobright, but it is not an ideal environment:

> Behind the white palings was a little garden; behind the garden an old, irregular, thatched house, facing the heath, and commanding a full view of the valley. (165)
> ....
> The house was encrusted with heavy thatchings, which dropped between the upper windows: the front, upon which the moonbeams directly played, had originally been white; but a huge pyracanth now darkened the greater portion. (188)

The description emphasizes the house's "irregularities," heavy thatchings, and faded white walls. The house is indeed irregular and has its imperfections: a low, head-bumping ceiling; a front door which opens directly into the front room; and a loft for storage into which Mrs. Yeobright is "not climber enough to venture" (166). Hardy makes it clear why one would want to live in such a dwelling. The daughter of a curate, "who had once dreamt of doing better things" (83), she married a small farmer and adopted his countrified way of life. Acutely class-conscious and aware of what she feels to be her social superiority, Mrs. Yeobright is to a degree able to adapt to the conditions offered by her house and life on the heath, but not without feeling the effects:

> The philosophy of her nature, and its limitation by circumstances, was almost written in her movements.... As her once elastic walk had become deadened by time, so had her natural pride of life been hindered in its blooming by her necessities. (248)

Like the faded white walls of her home, Mrs. Yeobright shows the effects

of time: the pleasures and hopes of her life have lost their freshness. Yet Mrs. Yeobright's remaining pride is enough to make her feel superior to the heathmen and give momentum to the tragedies, alienating her from Wildeve, Clym and Eustacia. Mrs. Yeobright's imperfections become painfully obvious.

As the heavy thatching of the house suggests, Mrs. Yeobright is protective, as she tells Eustacia when querying her about the guineas: "It is the instinct of every one to look after their own" (303). Against both Thomasin's and Clym's marriages, Mrs. Yeobright's feelings stem from her love and the potential harm that such ill-matched unions can produce:

> She had a singular insight into life, considering that she had never mixed with it. There are instances of persons who, without clear ideas of the things they criticize, have yet had clear ideas of the relations of those things. (248)

Unable to overcome her strong personal feelings about these marriages and to adjust her pride, Mrs. Yeobright widens the distances between her home and the homes of Thomasin and Clym. As she tells Diggory Venn,

> Both Thomasin and my son disobeyed me in marrying; therefore I have no interest in their households. Their troubles are of their own making. (333)

But her protective nature does reappear as Diggory verifies the relationship between Eustacia and Wildeve. Mrs. Yeobright's effort to make herself at home in Clym's house, at Diggory's request, is to make Wildeve and Eustacia remain within the bounds of their marriages. Adaptable as she may be in some aspects of her own life, Mrs.Yeobright is inflexible in her opinions and is only able to adapt herself to the needs of others when she feels the necessity to protect Clym and Thomasin. But her efforts are ineffectual, given her pride and Eustacia's and the tangled web of misunderstandings surrounding the

guineas.

Like houses, garden plots are part of the calculated way in which Hardy illustrates the differences between the characters. As part of one's envelope of circumstances, gardens are a possession into which the self flows. Bearing the imprint of a caring or negligent hand, gardens are indexes of character. But they are also given moral import as emblems of nourishment or negligence, emblems which suggest much about one's relationship with others.

Mrs. Yeobright's garden is described only vaguely as "a little garden" (188). But there are many indications that it is a thriving garden. Mrs. Yeobright makes Clym's homecoming a festive one with his favourite russet and ribstone apples, as well as the holly and mistletoe gathered from the heath (167), and advises Christian on the day of her death that she is going to see Clym and will not want any vegetables brought in for dinner (380). And, of course, there is her indoor garden: the flowers in the window which she prunes with care. Mrs. Yeobright's scrupulous attention to details is like, and often associated with, her attention to matters of conscience. After Clym moves to his cottage,

> [S]he went into her son's room, and with her own hands arranged it in order, for an imaginary time when he should return again. She gave some attention to her flowers, but it was perfunctorily bestowed, for they no longer charmed her. (270)

A passionate woman, whose ambitions for herself have been deadened by her marriage and time, the domineering Mrs. Yeobright transfers her social ambitions to her son and attempts to mold his life accordingly. As Woodcock points out, Mrs. Yeobright's wish that her son should not settle in the place he was born is, like Eustacia's and Clym's rebellions, a rejection of the traditional way of life on the heath--a

rejection involving her in the tragedy.[12] It is appropriate that in her anger with Clym's decision to marry Eustacia and remain on the heath, Mrs. Yeobright vents her displeasure on her flowers, as his decision is contrary to what she has tried to cultivate in him. Mrs. Yeobright's attention to details--domestic, social and moral--and her small low-ceilinged house are part of the recurring pattern of her claustrophobic desires, which Thomasin finds restrictive and Clym openly rebels against. Despite the care she has taken to cultivate her social ambitions in Clym, it is her strong moral sense which is nurtured in him and which directs him to his cultural goal: reforming the traditional way of life. Mrs. Yeobright's death awakens in Clym the same attention to details of conscience:

> He had spent the time working about the premises, sweeping leaves from the garden-paths, cutting dead stalks from the flower-beds, and nailing up creepers which had been displaced by the autumn winds. He took no particular pleasure in these deeds, but they formed a screen between himself and despair. Moreover, it had become a religion with him to preserve in good condition all that had lapsed from his mother's hands to his own. (409)

Clym's new "religion" is indicative of his Oedipal love, but also a measure of the extreme guilt which her death arouses.

Although captain Vye is not a major character, the captain and his residence play a part in the unfolding tragedy. Mistover Knap is an appropriate habitation for a retired naval captain whose appurtenances are for the most part nautical, down to his brass buttons, which bear an anchor on their face:

> A white mast, fitted up with spars and other nautical tackle, could be seen rising against dark clouds whenever the flames played brightly enough to reach it. Altogether the scene had much the appearance of a fortification upon which had been kindled a beacon fire. (108)

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[12]Woodcock 35.

....
The bank which enclosed the homestead, and protected it from the lawless state of the world without, was formed of thick square clods, dug from the ditch on the outside. (111)

If a man's home is his castle, the captain's rather shabby version, complete with dry moat, is appropriate to a rather shabby member of the local gentry. The captain is a member of what Woodcock calls the "small group of plebeian snobs"[13] who occupy centre stage. The heath seems an odd place for a nautical man to dry-dock when he has no family ties to hold him there. But Hardy makes it clear why the captain would take up residence on the heath:

> [The captain] since three of his ribs became broken in a shipwreck, had lived in this airy perch on Egdon, a spot which had taken his fancy because the house was to be had for next to nothing, and because a remote blue tinge on the horizon between the hills, visible from the cottage door, was traditionally believed to be the English Channel. (120)

The captain's house is not only his castle, but also akin to the crow's nest of a ship from which a sailor searches the horizon for spots of land. Yet Hardy explains that nautical considerations are not the only ones. Material considerations play their part in the selection process. Indifferent to the heath itself, the captain is able to make Mistover a suitable home for himself and find a sense of community in the audience he finds at the Quiet Woman for his naval stories. The house is isolated by its location but also by its uncongenial atmosphere:

> To call at the captain's cottage was always more or less an undertaking for the inferior inhabitants. Though occasionally chatty, his moods were erratic, and nobody could be certain how he would behave at any particular moment. Eustacia was reserved and lived very much to herself...They were the only genteel people of the district except the Yeobrights, and though far from rich, they did not feel the necessity for preserving a friendly face towards every man, bird, and beast which influenced their poorer neighbours. (142)

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[13]Woodcock 25.

Unlike Mrs. Yeobright, who gives her annual Christmas party, the Vyes live in nearly complete seclusion, isolated from the community and from each other.

Attentive to details of his own needs and desires, the captain allows Mistover's garden to bear the imprint of neglect. The derelict state of his garden reflects his neglect of that which does not interest him. But it is also indicative of the nonchalant moral guidance he gives Eustacia. Learning of her participation in the mumming, the captain is amused:

> 'But, Eustacia, you never did--ha! ha! Dammy, how 'twould have pleased me forty years ago! But remember, no more of it, my girl. You may walk on the heath night or day as you choose, so that you don't bother me; but no figuring in breeches again.' (204)

Eustacia replies that she will not, but the narrator also adds that her "moral training never exceed[ed] in severity a dialogue of this sort." Often not at home or unmindful of her whereabouts, the captain, as Eustacia's guardian, fails to cultivate in her a strong moral sense. The bank, which encloses the homestead to "protect it from the lawless world without," ironically encloses a rather lawless world within.

With the death of her parents, Eustacia is left to the care of her grandfather--a change she hates, feeling "like one banished"(120). Although her immediate needs of food and shelter are met, the captain's "castle" does not fulfill the desires of the "Queen of the Night." Eustacia's abode transcends the captain's walls:

> In the captain's cottage she could suggest mansions she had never seen. Perhaps that was because she frequented a vaster mansion than any of them, the open hills. Like the summer condition of the place around her, she was an embodiment of the phrase 'a populous solitude'--apparently so listless, void and quiet, she was really busy and full. (121)

Hardy suggests that Eustacia has affinities with the heath, so it is

appropriate that her "domicile" is the heath; the rainbarrow is her parlour where she meets lovers and receives callers, and the open hills her study where she broods in isolation. Of all the characters, Eustacia is most closely allied with the heath, but the relationship is not sympathetic, as her life on the heath is inimical to her desires:

> Egdon was her Hades, and since coming there she had imbibed much of what was dark in its tone, though inwardly and eternally unreconciled thereto. (119)

Eustacia escapes by inhabiting a world of her dreams. Although she longs to be in Budmouth with its "sunny afternoons on an esplanade" (120), her imaginative construction of her ideal residence is based on her reading: "the Lady's History [was] used at the establishment in which she was educated"(122). But her ideal residence remains curiously vague until Clym fuels her dream of escape with something more concrete than her images and better than Budmouth: the blazing splendour of the Louvre and the gorgeous King's Gallery of Versailles. But, characteristically, Eustacia resists the thought that anything little, or of English fashion, could be appropriate when Clym suggests that the Little Trianon "would suit us beautifully":

> 'I should hate to think that!'
> 'Then you could keep to the lawn in front of the grand palace. All about you there you would doubtless feel in a world of historical romance.' (257)

Gaiety, romance, and spacious luxury are Eustacia's ideal requirements--a place sympathetic to the expression of the self which resides in her imagination, the "goddess" Eustacia.

Eustacia is penniless and thus owns nothing which expresses the "self" of her imagination, except perhaps a few books which feed her fanciful desires. Possessions, many belonging to others or gathered from the heath, are often associated with the dark side of her nature or her

desire for freedom. On one occasion when we are given a glimpse into the interior of the captain's house Hardy draws attention to the objects in the window:

> The only visible articles in the room were those on the window-sill, which showed their shapes against the low sky: the middle article being the old hour-glass, the other two a pair of British urns which had been dug from a barrow near, and were used as flower-pots for two razor-leaved cactuses. (177)

The image of shapes against the sky is reminiscent of Eustacia standing on the rainbarrow at twilight. The silhouette is an appropriate image for several possessions, the urns, which are reminders that Egdon is her Hades and are tokens of her rebelliousness. At the root of Eustacia's rebelliousness is her desire to escape from the heath, but her rebelliousness becomes ineffectual. The planting of cacti, rather than flowers, is one means of expressing the rebellious self, but she has others:

> She only valued rest to herself when it came in the midst of other people's labour. Hence she hated Sundays when all was at rest...To relieve the tedium of this untimely day she would overhaul the cupboards containing her grandfather's old charts and other rubbish, humming Saturday night ballads of country people the while. But on Saturday nights she would frequently sing a psalm, and it was always on a week-day that she would read the Bible, that she might be unoppressed with a sense of doing her duty. (122-3)

Only doing her duty as a means of demonstrating her social non-conformity, Eustacia's sense of duty is whimsical when compared with the self-sacrifice of Mrs. Yeobright, Clym, and Thomasin. Eustacia's refinement becomes little more than the idleness of a self-indulgent young woman. Her ritual with her grandmother's hour-glass aptly conveys her idleness, but also her predicament. A "peculiar pleasure [is] derived from watching a material representation of time's gradual slide away" as she waits for Wildeve (124). Eustacia must rely on others to

achieve her grand desire, yet she gives very little of herself to others. She is a recipient, and an ungrateful one. Given a home by her grandfather, albeit an indifferent one, and the use of the hourglass and telescope, she repays his generosity by burning his precious thorn roots to lure Wildeve. From Clym, she also receives a home, but one which does not fit into her scheme. Clym rejects the diamond trade, his life in Paris, which is for him a symbol of "self-indulgence and vainglory"; however, Eustacia longs for gaiety, romance, and spacious luxury.

Clym and Eustacia's cottage is given only a cursory treatment. With their decision for a hasty marriage, Clym must quickly find a suitable abode:

> [He finds] a house, small, secluded, and with its windows boarded up... about two miles beyond the village of East Egdon, and six miles distant [from his mother's house]. (268)

The vagueness of the description induces the reader to call upon what Enstice refers to as "a composite picture of representative heath dwelling" that is built up from the descriptions of houses: a low, rambling, thatched house surrounded by a garden, with outbuildings and a paddock.[14] As far as physical texture is concerned, the cottage remains little more than an impression of a representative heath dwelling. However, the images of its locked door and window, from which Eustacia watches Mrs. Yeobright, loom large as integral parts in determining the fates of the major character. Eustacia's fear and guilt about her relationship with Wildeve and her defiant pride alienate her from her mother-in-law and are vividly caught in Eustacia's refusal to open the door for Mrs. Yeobright. But the locked door is also a barrier between Clym and his mother--a barrier to which Eustacia holds the key. Not

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[14]Enstice 77-78.

wanting Mrs. Yeobright to see Wildeve there and determining that the visit is only to see Clym, Eustacia not only denies her mother-in-law admittance, but also misconstrues Clym's cry of "Mother" as his reception of her. In her refusal to open the door, Eustacia unwittingly alienates mother from son through the message which is conveyed and precipates Mrs. Yeobright's death. Eustacia's protection of Clym in locking the door becomes a self-protective measure which is ineffectual because of the misinterpretations her action engenders and the deception she continues to engage in to hide her action from Clym.

Clym's decision to live in a small, secluded house on the heath is a fatal error in judgment--a part of Clym's blindness. Because it is a temporary lodging, the house lacks individuality. The temporary nature of their residence there is different for each: for Clym, a transitional residence before their move to Budmouth and the school he plans to open; for Eustacia, a temporary abode before her freedom from the heath and her desired move to the fashionable world of Paris. The house for Clym is the hermitage he desires for his studies, yet for a time it fulfills both their needs as a love nest for a newly-married couple. But Clym's hermitage and their love nest become, for Eustacia, a gaol in which she is both prisoner and custodian.[15] The simplicity of their home on the heath is a reminder of the fact that a wife must share her husband's way of life. Clym's way of life, his aim for higher happiness, is tied to his intellectual life:

> Yeobright's local peculiarity was that in striving at high thinking he still cleaved to plain living--nay, wild and meagre living in many respects... (230)

Eustacia openly voices her desires to Wildeve:

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[15]Gregor 95.

> But do I desire unreasonably much in wanting what is called life--music, poetry, passion, war, and all the beating and pulsing that is going on in the great arteries of the world? (345)

The locked door is a barrier between Clym and his mother as well as between Eustacia and Mrs. Yeobright and leads to the separation of Clym and Eustacia; the house on the heath, Clym's books which he slavishly studies, and his furze-cutting gear alienate Eustacia from Clym.

On the day she attempts to visit the couple, Mrs. Yeobright views the garden of Clym's cottage:

> The small apple tree, of a sort called Ratheripe, grew just inside the gate, the only one which throve in the garden, by reason of the lightness of the soil; and among the fallen apples in the ground beneath were wasps rolling drunk with the juice, or creeping about the little caves in each fruit which they had eaten out before stupefied by its sweetness. (341)

The garden with its fallen apples, a seasonal reminder, is one of the many scenes in which an image reflects the perception of the viewer and the events of the plot. As Gregor observes, "Hardy expresses the inner landscape in terms of the outer one."[16] Mrs. Yeobright is acutely aware of the destructive potential of Clym's marriage to Eustacia; she sees what Clym does not. Like the stupefied wasps, Clym is caught, to use Gregor's phrase, in the "drugged absorption" of his own life as a furze-cutter. Clym fails to see that the incongruities between himself and Eustacia are irreconcilable. Given her desire to escape the heath, Eustacia is drugged by Clym's intoxicating stories of Paris and refuses to recognize that his decision to return to the heath is the result of irreversible convictions. Both Clym and Eustacia's negligences reach beyond the bounderies of their domestic life and affect the lives of many. As the image of the fallen apples suggests, their cottage is part

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[16]Gregor 95.

of a fallen world in which sin and guilt, as well as individual passions and desires, form a pattern of cause and effect which moves the narrative forward.

After Mrs. Yeobright's death, Blooms-End threatens to become a further barrier between the couple when Clym inherits his mother's possessions:

> As he surveyed the rooms he felt strongly disinclined for the alterations which would have to be made in the time-honoured furnishings of his parents and grandparents, to suit Eustacia's modern ideas. The gaunt oak-cased clock, with the picture of the Ascension on the door-panel and the Miraculous Draught of the Fishes on the base; his grandmother's corner cupboard with the glass door through which the spotted china was visible; the dumb-waiter; the wooden tea-trays; the hanging fountain with the brass top--whither would these venerable articles have to be banished? (382)

Clym's attachment to these goods links him with the past. They are for him analogous to the "battered tankard," yet he reluctantly entertains the thought of stowing them away to suit Eustacia's tastes. In doing so, he demonstrates the extent of his ability to adapt to the needs of Eustacia. Perceptive of her desire for luxury and a gay world, Clym is incapable of abandoning his educational scheme for Eustacia, or for his mother. Although Eustacia never moves into Blooms-End, Clym's inheritance of his mother's house becomes an additional barrier, both spatial and metaphoric, between the couple, for it is Eustacia's unwitting complicity in Mrs. Yeobright's death which separates the couple and intensifies Eustacia's need to depart from the heath.

Foreshadowing the tragic deaths, the gruesome image of the Quiet Woman's sign is appropriate to Wildeve, whose grace of movement is "the pantomimic expression of a lady-killing career" (93):

> The sign of [the inn] represented the figure of a matron carrying her head under her arm, beneath which gruesome design was written the couplet so well-known to frequenters of the inn:--
>
> SINCE THE WOMAN'S QUIET
> LET NO MAN BREED RIOT.
>
> The front of the house was towards the heath and Rainbarrow.... Upon the door was a neglected brass plate, bearing the unexpected inscription, 'Mr. Wildeve, Engineer'--useless yet cherished relic from the time when he had been started in that profession in an office at Budmouth by those who had hoped much from him, and had been disappointed. (92)

A clever fellow, Wildeve was brought up to do better things--to be a professional man--but took to the public house to make his living, a way of life distasteful to Thomasin. The Quiet Woman is a come-down for Wildeve and is viewed as such by all, even Wildeve. For Mrs. Yeobright and Eustacia it is indicative of his social inferiority, yet also a part of a recurring pattern which expresses his moral defects. Wildeve is often careless in his attention to details: neglecting his cherished brass plaque just as he neglects the specifics of his wedding license, the evening companionship of his wife, the removal of his great coat before diving into the weir, and the advice of the couplet which gives his inn its name. In Hardy's novels the small details so often become the big details which play their part in determining one's fate.

Wildeve's garden does not bear the imprint of a negligent hand, but Hardy makes it clear that Wildeve had little to do with its original cultivation:

> Wildeve's Patch, as it was called, [was] a plot of land redeemed from the heath, and after long and laborious years brought into cultivation. The man who had discovered that it could be tilled died of the labour: the man who succeeded him in possession ruined himself in fertilizing it. Wildeve came like Amerigo Vespucci, and received the honours due those who had gone before. (87)

Woodcock claims that Wildeve is more character type than a man: a man of sentiment,[17] citing Hardy's description of Wildeve:

> To be yearning for the difficult, to be weary of that offered; to care for the remote, to dislike the near; it was Wildeve's nature always. This is the true mark of a man of sentiment. (274)

Not as fully realized as Clym, Mrs. Yeobright, or Eustacia, Wildeve is seldom more than a character type who has moments of generosity, gentleness, and vindictiveness which make him come to life. Swayed by his feelings, Wildeve gambles for the guineas Mrs. Yeobright sends to Thomasin and plans to divide his inheritance between his domestic obligations to Thomasin and his chivalrous intentions towards Eustacia. In his love affairs, Wildeve is, as the descriptions suggest, a type of sentimental adventurer who cares for the remote and distant more than that which is closest to him. He feels that

> To clasp for five minutes what was another man's through all the rest of the year was a kind of thing he of all men could appreciate. He had long since begun to sigh again for Eustacia; indeed, it may be asserted that signing the marriage register with Thomasin was the natural signal to his heart to return to its first quarters, that and the extra complications of Eustacia's marriage was the one addition required to make that return compulsory. (323)

Again like Amerigo Vespucci, Wildeve lays claim to that which is not technically his. In Wildeve emerges a pattern of care and neglect, which is first signalled by his cherished yet neglected brass plaque--a pattern in which Wildeve juggles his personal desires and his concern for others. In the description of Wildeve's patch, Hardy stresses Wildeve's opportunistic streak in receiving the fruits of others' labours and invites us to see Wildeve's dubious moral character. But

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[17]Woodcock 31. Woodcock claims that Wildeve's name betrays his origin in Hardy's mind, for it is more fitting to one of the two-dimensional figures of eighteenth-century comedies than a leading figure in a mid-Victorian novel.

perhaps a more apt description would be, to use a phrase incorrectly applied to Gabriel, "he was a man whose moral colour was a kind of pepper-and-salt mixture" (Madding Crowd, 51).

Thomasin's first appearance in the novel is reminiscent of Bathsheba's appearance in the spring wagon as she moves to Weatherbury. Thomasin is asleep in Diggory Venn's van, stopped in front of the Quiet Woman, on her return to Mrs. Yeobright's home, after the unsuccessful attempt to marry Wildeve. Awakened by Mrs. Yeobright's presence, Thomasin asks, "'Where am I, aunt?'"; the reply is: "'Nearly home, my dear'" (90). The episode takes on an emblematic quality foreshadowing the various homes of Thomasin. She lives in two different residences at various stages of her life: at Blooms-End, the anxious fiancee; at the Quiet Woman, the wife of a philandering husband; back at Blooms-End, the widow with a small child. And the novel ends with Thomasin marrying Diggory, moving to his dairy farm. Thomasin's remarkable traits in this self-absorbed world are her concern for others and her ability to adapt to new situations: after her marriage to Wildeve and until her courtship with Venn, Thomasin is a character who remains in the background but is the voice of practicality and good sense. Always concerned with the feelings of others, Thomasin still manages to order her life according to her priorities, which are not grand obsessive passions. Her most notable possession is a very personal one--her hair:

> It was braided according to a calendric system: the more important the day the more numerous the strands in the braid. On ordinary working-days, she braided it in threes; on ordinary Sundays in fours; at May-polings and gypseyings, and the like, she braided it in fives. Years ago she had said that when she married she would braid it in sevens. She braided it in sevens today. (215-16)

Thomasin wears her blue silk dress and braids her hair in sevens to wed

Wildeve, even though there had been much disappointment, because of her ability to overcome life's frustrations and to follow in a course she feels is right. As her hair suggests, Thomasin seeks orderliness in her life and is able to make rational and practical distinctions, to decide what is important.

Although Thomasin has the propensity to immerse herself in the little details of domestic life to avoid the "emotional aspect of things," she does not, like Mrs. Yeobright, allow the little things to become the big things. She helps Mrs. Yeobright gather the apples and holly for Clym's homecoming and attends to the details of her trousseau because of her strong sense of duty to the needs of others as well as her own. But she does her duty without demanding much in return. Even though she has the capacity to make distinctions between the important and the not so important, small details are not insignificant. When leaving Blooms-End to search for Wildeve on the night of the deaths, Thomasin displays her capacity to be attentive to the little things even in times of great emotional turmoil:

> She hastily fetched the infant, wrapped it up, cloaked herself as before, and shovelling the ashes over the fire to prevent accidents, went into the open air. Pausing first to put the door-key in its old place behind the shutter... (429)

Thomasin habitually attends to such details as a means of protecting others. Ironically, the one time she asks for something for herself, the guineas from her aunt, Thomasin unwittingly begins a series of cause and effect--a series fueled by the passions of others. But after returning to Clym his portion of the guineas, Thomasin characteristically looks on the bright side: "'One thing is cheerful in it--the guineas are not lost'" (308).

Hardy elaborates little on the inside features of the homes. As Enstice observes, there is one exception in each case, the chimney-corners.[18] Enstice attributes this to Hardy's calculated method of demonstrating man's relationship to nature, "a harmony of balanced disputes":

> ...Man and Nature, striving with each other, yet never actually overcoming. Man defies the heath by his fiery gesture [the fifth of November bonfires], yet the following spring he will once more rely on it for his living.[19]

He argues that the hearth fires are internal reminders of man's defiant and dependent relationship with nature. Hardy explains the impulse behind the bonfires:

> Moreover to light a fire is the instinctive and resistant act of man when, at the winter ingress, the curfew is sounded throughout Nature. It indicates a spontaneous, Promethean rebelliousness against that fiat that this recurrent season shall bring foul times, cold darkness, misery, and death. Black chaos comes, and the fettered gods of the earth say, Let there be light. (67)

Fires are associated with man's instinctive response to needs and desires, and the recurring use of chimney-corners and their fires is part of the pattern of individual passions. Just as hearths are built for a certain kind of fire, each with its own character and purpose, so too are characters distinguished by their passions.

Mrs. Yeobright's passionate desire for her son's social advancement, like the smoke from her fireplace which "played round the notches of the chimney-crook, struck against the saltbox, and got lost among the flitches" (193), is lost in the vagaries of Clym's educational scheme and his marriage to Eustacia. Similarly, the image of the captain's fireplace, with its cavernous hollow "where smoke blundered

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[18]Enstice 78.

[19]Enstice 85.

about on its way to the square bit of the sky at the top" (162), suggests his relationship to Eustacia. The blundering captain literally tends to his fire; his fuel commands more attention than his granddaughter. Gaming and chance are associated with the chimney-corner of the Quiet Woman. Here the dice are thrown for a gown-piece which is won by Christian, but this is only the beginning of a series of games. With the same dice, Christian later loses Mrs. Yeobright's guineas to Wildeve, who loses them to Diggory. Hardy's love of inversions gives us another image of the inn's hearth which is the end result of a bigger gamble: the image of soggy bank notes drying on a line, while Wildeve and Eustacia lie dead in an upstairs room. At Clym's cottage there no image of fire, only the image of Clym curled up on the rug before the hearth in his furze-cutting clothes, and a sense of the smouldering rebelliousness of Eustacia.

To build a fire is an instinctive response in this harsh and cold landscape, but to build a fire for others is often a caring response to the needs of others. With the exception of Eustacia's exploitation of the bonfires to lure Wildeve, fire, like the provision of food for the benefit of others in Far from the Madding Crowd, is a donation, a gift of concern. Charley assumes the responsibilities of a guardian, building a hearth fire and bonfire for Eustacia after her separation from Clym. Clym builds a fire for his mother in the shed where she dies. But something must be said about the timeliness of such attention,[20] for the

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[20]The time "tenets" are another way that Hardy reinforces the fragmented and isolated nature of the community:

> West Egdon believed in Blooms-End time, East Egdon in the time of the Quiet Woman Inn. Grandfer Cantle's watch had numbered many followers in years gone by, but since he had grown older faiths were shaken. (186)

old adage "Better late than never" cannot apply in such a world of strong passions and intricately woven strands of cause and effect. Clym only becomes a guardian to his mother when it is too late. Their relationship is marked by a profound coldness, and so it is appropriate that Clym gives more attention to the cold and ashen fire of his dead mother than he gave to her when alive. Clym is simply too late in assuming the role of fire-tender for his dead mother. Thus, he becomes the guardian of his mother's memory and her relics to assuage his guilt: "an itinerant preacher and lecturer on morally unimpeachable subjects"--among them, mother love (474). Of the minor characters, only Susan Nunsuch is seen at her chimney-corner. She uses her hearth fire to burn an effigy of Eustacia in hopes that the "evil spell" cast over her son will be broken and thus restore his health.

Henry James's Madame Merle advises that the self "flows into everything that belongs to us--and then it flows back again." In Diggory Venn's case, his trade flows not only into his possessions but into his very skin:

> [L]ike his van, he was completely red. One dye of that tincture covered his clothes, the cap upon his head, his boots, his face, his hands. He was not temporarily overlaid with colour: it permeated him. (58)

Like Troy's red coat, Venn's colouring distinguishes him from other characters and sets him apart from the social world. In Native, residences are definitive of social class. Hardy says of the Nunsuch home: "Only a few inches of mud wall kept [Johnny] and his family from being gipsies themselves" (127). Venn's reddle van makes him a member of the gipsy class, a class to which he does not belong, given his wealth,

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[20](cont'd) All of the clocks which affect the lives of the major characters are late and suggest the lateness of their attentions to others.

education, and race. Taking to his trade after Thomasin refuses his first offer of marriage,

> The reddleman lived like a gipsy; but gipsies he scorned. He was about as thriving as travelling basket and mat makers; but he had nothing to do with them. He was more decently born and brought up than the cattle-drovers who passed and repassed him in his wanderings; but they merely nodded to him. His stock was more valuable than that of pedlars; but they did not think so, and passed his cart with eyes straight ahead. He was such an unnatural colour to look at that the men of round-abouts and wax-work shows seemed gentlemen beside him; but he considered them low company, and remained aloof. Among all these squatters and folks of the road the reddleman continually found himself; yet he was not one of them. His occupation tended to isolate him, and isolated he was mostly seen to be. (131-32)

The dilemma of the reddleman's situation is that he is cut off from those of his class because of his chosen trade and the life he must lead, yet refuses to mingle with those he finds himself amidst. Venn's way of life, like that of the other major characters, is a part of the recurring pattern of isolation and loneliness stemming from individual needs and desires as well as from one's sense of social superiority. Venn's redness does mark him as an outsider, like a visitant from another time:

> He was of a class rapidly becoming extinct in Wessex, filling at present in the rural world the place which, during the last century, the dodo occupied in the world of animals. He is a curious, interesting, and nearly perished line between obsolete forms of life and those which generally prevail. (59)

Much attention is given to setting Venn apart from other individuals, but he is more like a Gabriel Oak than a Frank Troy. Venn's responsiveness to Thomasin, like Gabriel's to Bathsheba, is linked to his trade.

> To be in Thomasin's heath, and near her, yet unseen, was the one ewe-lamb of pleasure left to him.
>
> Then came the incident of that day [Thomasin's unsuccessful wedding], and the reddleman, still loving her well, was excited by this accidental service to her at a critical juncture to vow an active devotion to her cause, instead of, as hitherto,

sighing and holding aloof. (134)

The mobility of Venn's van, the independence his way of life offers, allows him the freedom to fulfill his moral obligations to Thomasin--obligations based on love. Like Gabriel, who has his successes and failures, Venn is unable to stop the tragic outcome, but the novel ends on a hopeful note, largely owing to Victorian tastes. After giving up the reddle trade, which enriched his purse, Venn is able to assume his proper place in society, in the class to which he rightly belongs, with the purchase of a dairy farm and his marriage to Thomasin. The two achievements are, as Millgate observed of Gabriel's accomplishments, "splendidly one."

It seems ironic that the most congenial domicile on Egdon Heath is the "lurid red" van of a transient occupant of the heath. Within the world of the heath, Venn is a nearly extinct form of life in more than his trade. Venn's well-meaning and self-effacing attentions to the welfare of others distinguish him from others of his class on the heath, whose predominant characteristic is self-absorption. The cottages of Native are akin to Boldwood's home in their lack of congeniality. The congeniality of a home is more than the simple provision of food and shelter; it is the ability to recognize and be sympathetic to the needs of others. Millgate speculates that Hardy "no doubt took pleasure in the gradual revelation of the man of courage and good sense who lay hidden beneath the grotesque reddleman exterior of Diggory Venn."[21] When Venn brings Thomasin home in his van, Hardy carefully begins to reveal the sympathetic man who lay hidden beneath the grotesque exterior:

> On the door being open, [Mrs. Yeobright] perceived at the end of the van an extemporized couch, around which was hung apparently

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[21]Millgate 141.

> all the drapery that the reddleman possessed, to keep the occupant of the little couch from contact with the red materials of his trade. (88-9)

Like the pale red and tattered letter within a brown-paper packet within a leather pouch, the red string placed in Wildeve's path, and the red hand knocking at Clym's door, the carefully hung drapery is a sign of Venn's devotion and concern for Thomasin. It is not simply Venn's trade which flows into his possessions, but also the self which flows into them. The presence of his van at opportune moments, like his "silent system" of inducement and Thomasin's tattered letter, betray his dogged loyalty to his beloved. It is his loyalty as well as his trade which ultimately enrich his life, making his union with Thomasin possible. But Venn also has the capacity to care for others. Observing Johnny Nunsuch's cut, Venn

> took a piece of rag from a satchel containing sewing materials, tore off the strip, which, like everything else, was tinged red, and proceeded to bind up the wound. (128)

The "lurid red" van radiates warmth, the congeniality of Venn.

Domestic things, from the houses which the lovers gaze at from afar to the sewing table of Mrs. Yeobright with the chastising letter from Clym, often are, or become, associated with sadness and isolation. Such objects may be plot levers or give scenic vividness, but they are often part of the fine fabric of one's cluster of appurtenances. Hardy gives the obvious nautical accoutrements to the captain, and to Mrs. Yeobright a clock with miraculous pictures. Eustacia's things are a little more than her clothing and the unspecified "small bundle" she takes from her grandfather's house the night of her death. The telescope, hourglass, pistols and mumming costume, associated with Eustacia, are not technically hers; this fact emphasizes her dependence

upon others.

Characters also possess sentimental reminders of the past. Wildeve's pretentious plaque and the captain's nostalgic reminders of his seafaring days are emblems of abandoned careers. Mrs. Yeobright, with her heirlooms, and Clym, with locks of Eustacia's hair, keep emblems of family ties. There are also keepsakes of unrequited love: Venn has Thomasin's apologetic letter, and Charley obtains a lock of Eustacia's hair. While it is natural to desire reminders of that which is past or unattainable, the desire to alter time and circumstances becomes an obsession for Eustacia and Clym. Eustacia's obsession is made concrete in the recurring image of Eustacia with her grandfather's telescope and her grandmother's hourglass. Eustacia spies on Wildeve and then on Clym, who are more than lovers--they are potential liberators. Clym's books, which he lavishly studies, are never fully described, suggesting the vagueness of his intentions and his changing ideas about the school he hopes to open. Clym returns home to "clean away [the] cobwebs" (244) of the heath's pagan and primitive way of life. Ironically, the only cobwebs he cleans away are, literally, the ones in his mother's doorway; this action signals the beginning of his new and more intense obsession. For Clym, his mother's relics are more than sentimental reminders of family ties; they are insistent reminders of his guilt. Mrs. Yeobright's clock with pictures of the Ascension and the Miraculous Draught of Fishes is suggestive of her grand passion to transform her son into a fine gentleman who could reject the traditional way of life by settling in Paris. As a contrast to such obsessive characters, Hardy makes the practical Thomasin, upon her return to Blooms-End, alter her clock by removing the brass knobs.

Domestic things become substitutes. Clym vents his anger at Eustacia by smashing her desk. Wildeve plans to give Thomasin half his inheritance to settle his domestic obligations. Fifty guineas and an old-fashioned cup without a handle are the sacred gifts Mrs. Yeobright intends for Clym, rather than the gift of warm and charitable love. Venn methodically searches for the lost glove belonging to Thomasin:

> At last Venn appeared to find it; whereupon he stood up and raised it to his lips. Then placing it in his breast-pocket--the nearest receptacle to a man's heart permitted by modern raiment... (455)

The glove is a substitute for Thomasin's presence, but the loving kiss he bestows upon the keepsake is another reminder of Venn's generous love.

Properties and possessions do matter in this world of "plebeian snobs," as Woodcock calls them, where one's social status is resident in the things one owns. Venn's red "tight-fitting suit of courduroy, excellent in quality, not much worn" (59) is taken into account by the captain and Mrs. Yeobright. The captain, with his "square bottles of his square cellaret," points out the countrified ways of the Yeobrights:

> 'They sit in the kitchen, drink mead and elderwine, and sand the floor to keep it clean. A sensible way of life; but how would you like it?' (173)

Eustacia fails to take into acount their way of life, for she sees in Clym the trappings of a fine gentleman with a trade in the diamond business. Wildeve's inn is taken into account by all. Mrs. Yeobright, with her clock of religious images, is more concerned with moral obligations than social superiority, yet both interest her a great deal. Taking Wildeve's appurtenances into account, Mrs. Yeobright sees that he is not good enough for Thomasin. Having little to judge Eustacia by, Mrs. Yeobright complains to Clym that she is "a lazy and dissatisfied

girl." Working up to a proposal of marriage, Venn takes into account his possessions as well as Thomasin's:

> '...Yes, I am given up body and soul to the making of money. Money is all my dream.'
> 'O Diggory, how wicked!' said Thomasin reproachfully ...
> 'Yes, 'tis rather a rum course,' said Venn....
> 'You who used to be so nice!'
> 'Well, that's an argument I rather like, because what a man has once been he may be again.' Thomasin blushed. 'Except that it is rather harder now,' Venn continued.
> 'Why?' she asked.
> 'Because you be richer than you were at that time.'
> 'O no--not much. I have made it nearly all over to the baby, as it was my duty to do, except just enough to live on.'
> 'I am rather glad of that,' said Venn softly, and regarding her from the corner of his eye, 'for it makes it easier for us to be friendly.' (458)

The resonant issues of social and moral superiority are subdued by the practicality and good sense in this poignant discussion between the two lovers. Whether real or imagined, appurtenances do matter a great deal.

The history of environments and people is intimately linked to things. Like an archaeologist, Hardy is concerned with the texture of life, what people care about and how they fulfill their needs, as well as with placing them in the continuum of human experience. Hardy stresses that the heath is a repository for the human past and that man is often only the penultimate possessor of his goods. Standing in the heath, Clym meditates on this point:

> His imagination would then people the spot with its ancient inhabitants: forgotten Celtic tribes trod their tracks around him.... Those of dyed barbarians who had chosen the cultivable tracts were, in comparison with those who had left their marks here, as writers on paper beside writers on parchment. Their record had long ago perished by the plough, while the works of these remained. Yet they had all lived and died unconscious of the different fates awaiting their relics. It reminded him that unforeseen factors operate in the evolution of immortality. (449)

In <u>The Return of the Native</u>, Hardy gives us bits and pieces of properties and possessions, which are the records of his characters.

IV. Jude the Obscure: The Shabby Purlieu

In Jude the Obscure, Hardy bemoans the loss of a way of life which is rich in history and human associations. He describes the physical world of Marygreen, where only the well-shaft "remained absolutely unchanged":

> Many of the thatched and dormered dwelling-houses had been pulled down of late years, and many trees felled on the green. Above all, the original church, hump-backed, wood-turreted, and quaintly hipped, had been taken down, and either cracked up into heaps of road-metal in the lane, or utilized as pig-sty walls, garden seats, guard-stones to fences, and rockeries in the flower-beds of the neighbourhood. In place of it a new tall building of Gothic design, unfamiliar to English eyes, had been erected on a new piece of ground by a certain obliterator of historic records who had run down from London and back in a day. The site whereon so long had stood the ancient temple to the Christian divinities was not even recorded on the green and level grass-plot that had immemorially been the churchyard, the obliterated graves being commemorated by eighteenpenny cast-iron crosses warranted to last five years.[1]

Marygreen is representative of the drastic changes occurring in rural communities. Local history is reduced to scrap materials for pig-sties and flower gardens and to cheap cast-iron crosses. The rural communities are deprived of their past--a heinous crime to a man for whom the past meant much. As Enstice points out,

> The bitterness of this attack on Victorian modernism is that of a man used to a world in which buildings and communities are the product of centuries of adaptation to need, not the whim of the passing moment (the barn in Far from the Madding Crowd is of course the best example of this sense of hallowing by need).[2]

But Hardy is not simply attacking the whimsical nature of change or the obliteration of local history. It is significant that he does not mention that the houses are replaced. The theme of homelessness is enunciated in the pilgrimage of Jude as he seeks a way of life which is

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[1]Thomas Hardy, Jude the Obscure, ed. C. H. Sisson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978) 50. Future references are to this edition.

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[2]Andrew Enstice, Thomas Hardy: Landscapes of the Mind (London: Macmillan Press, 1979) 156.

meaningful for him, but it is also revealed in the physical details of this changing landscape. Jude's search for an ideal life, to find that which can fulfill him and give meaning to his life, becomes also a struggle to express his individuality within the social world. Jude's search is a process of discovery as he is made painfully aware of the reality of the world in which he lives.

The setting of Jude the Obscure is, as Enstice indicates, a departure from the "enclosed landscapes" of Weatherbury and Egdon Heath. Hardy has opened the arena; no longer is the focus on a single community. Ian Gregor notes that although "the novel is structured in terms of places, they hardly seem to matter as the characters move restlessly from place to place."[3] Similarly, Michael Millgate observes,

> Movement from place to place is persistent throughout the novel, its importance emphasized by the heading given to various parts: "At Marygreen," "At Christminster," and so on. Yet Jude is a novel curiously deficient in the sense of place. Apart from Christminster and Shaston, the places visited by Jude and Sue remain, by comparison with places in Hardy's other novels, singularly devoid of individuality, atmosphere, and associations.[4]

Hardy's presentation of this new landscape is indeed different from the previous novels in this curious deficiency of a sense of place--a deficiency which can partially be accounted for because the main action of the narrative moves forward through the phases of Jude's life, and Jude is not often personally involved in the active life of the communities. Unlike Far from the Madding Crowd and The Return of the Native, the sense of the community in Jude, as individualized by customs and traditional cycles of events, remains in the background. As Enstice

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[3]Ian Gregor, The Great Web: The Form of Hardy's Major Fiction (London: Faber, 1974) 209.

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[4]Michael Millgate, Thomas Hardy: His Career as a Novelist (London: Bodley Head, 1971) 332.

points out, it is "an undercurrent to the large landscapes of Jude."[5]

But the lack of sense of place is also a result of the almost total absence of those wonderful Hardyan indicators of place--identifiable buildings. With the exception of Christminster, Jude's great-aunt's cottage, the Melchester training school, and Old-Grove Place, buildings scarcely exist as indentifiable individual structures without reference to their interior coatings of fixtures and furnishings. Buildings are little more than generalized descriptions: rectory-house, school-house, cottage, inn, public house, lodging, and so forth.[6] With the exception of Drusilla's cottage, one would be hard-pressed to conjure up concrete images of Jude's residences. Functionality and anonymity are apt descriptors for his abodes: between Marygreen and Alfredston, "a lonely roadside cottage" with a garden (103); at Christminster, "a room in Beersheba" (125); at Melchester, "lodgings" near Close Gate (188) and later "more commodious quarters" (227); at Aldbrickham, a cottage with a sign that reads "'Jude Fawley: Monumental Mason' (as he called himself on his front door)" (326); at Kennetbridge, one of the "old dun-tiled cottages with gardens and fruit trees" (390); and back at Christminster, a series of lodgings on Mildew Lane and elsewhere. The list does indeed make dreary reading and is precisely what Hardy is conveying. Jude's sufferings are intimately linked to the world in which he lives--a world which is "gloomy,"

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[5]Enstice 153.

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[6]Enstice observes that the buildings in Marygreen are "sparse, mostly undescribed, and given only a cursory mention when absolutely necessary--'the corner by the rectory house,' 'this being one of the few old houses left' [and so forth]. Everything tends to a view of the utterly functional nature of the area, unrelieved by any hint of human spirituality" (158).

"grimy,"[7] and "meanly utilitarian" (53) and which thwarts his spiritual needs. At the end of the novel, Jude muses on his life:

> But I always felt I could do one thing if I had the opportunity. I could accumulate ideas, and impart them to others. I wonder if the Founders had such as I in their minds--a fellow good for nothing else but that particular thing?... I hear that soon there is going to be a better chance for such helpless students as I was. (480)

It is Jude's search for a meaningful life which is central to the novel. Looking out from Wren's Theatre at Christminster, Jude has a revelation:

> He saw that his destiny lay not with [the college], but among the manual toilers in the shabby purlieu which he himself occupied... (166)

But Hardy draws out all the ironies of Jude's life by showing that he is different from those he is fated to live among. Refusing to accept his role in society, Jude is caught in and between two worlds: social reality and his dream world. His lodgings are part of the social world in which he can never find fulfillment. As Enstice points out,

> Marygreen becomes the dried carcass of a society that can never offer fulfillment to a man such as Jude. Its anonymity takes on a cruel human aspect, in which the animal law of survival of the fittest takes precedence over all else.[8]

But this description is appropriate to all the locations of the novel, in which society represents all that is lowest in man.

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[7]Millgate includes an excerpt from Edmund Gosse's review of Jude for the St. James's Gazette:

> It is a very gloomy, it is even a grimy story that Mr. Hardy has at last presented to his admirers.... In his new book Mr. Hardy concentrates his observation on the sordid and painful side of life and nature. We rise from the perusal of it stunned with a sense of the hollowness of existence.

Gosse unwittingly gives testimony to the effectiveness of Hardy's method.(325)

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[8]Enstice 157.

In such an anonymous world, meanly utilitarian and full of social moulds, Jude struggles to express his individuality as he pursues a meaningful life and resists the ways of the world. With the restless movement from place to place, Jude must create his nests within his temporary lodgings by surrounding himself with that which is meaningful to him. Personal possessions are still expressive of "self" and acquired to fulfill needs and desires; and how one treats the material world says much about how others are treated. The process of creating nests, making lodgings a home and adjusting to new relationships, is given much more emphasis than in the previous novels because the process is intimately linked to Jude's changing perceptions about his needs and desires. Jude's homes cannot be retreats where the longings of the soul can be realized because his desires reach beyond the walls of home and are contrary to the established order of the social world. Hardy points out in his original preface that the novel is "the tragedy of unfulfilled aims" (39). But as Millgate notes,

> The pattern of Jude cannot be spoken of as a fall from "great estate", except in so far as the central figure does exemplify--in all aspects of his emotional, intellectual, and spiritual life--the gradual, relentless atrophy of hope, the one thing in which he had been rich when the novel opened.'

The gradual disintegration of Jude's hope is intimately linked to the end of each phase of his life, as the "stern grind of reality" (473) brings disillusionment and diminishes his opportunities for a new endeavour which will enrich his life.

In his original preface to Jude, Hardy states that the novel is an "endeavour to give shape and coherence to a series of seemings, or personal impressions" (39). As Irving Howe observes,

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'Millgate 328.

> What is essential in Jude, surviving and deepening in memory, is a series of moments rather than a sequence of actions. These moments--one might also call them panels of representation--tend to resemble snapshots rather than moving pictures, concentrated vignettes rather than worked up dramatic scenes.[10]

Norman Page argues that Hardy's "pictorialism" in his novels is indebted to the old masters, the Dutch and Flemish schools, and the pre-Raphaelites for his pictorial allusions, but to Victorian narrative painting for his pictorial technique:

> Within the frame of the typical narrative painting, figures are used to convey information or suggestions in a manner which recalls the storyteller's use of material objects.... In the Victorian period, then, not only did nearly every picture tell a story, but many stories carried out their business through a kind of picture-making.[11]

In the Victorian tradition, the narrative of Jude progresses through a series of vignettes, but they hark back to the earlier narrative paintings of Hogarth's cycles:[12] The Harlot's Progress and The Rake's Progress. Both Hogarth and Hardy consciously use emblems to convey much about character. In plate 3 of The Harlot's Progress, the expression of the harlot is linked to her possessions: the same fashionable gown, now dishevelled, she wore in plate 2; the hat box over her head belonging to a thief; the stolen watch she studies; and the pictures of Captain Macheath, a robber, and Dr. Sacheverell, a minister who preached an

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[10]Irving Howe, Thomas Hardy (London: Macmillan, 1967) 145.

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[11]Norman Page, Thomas Hardy (London: Routledge, 1977) 83.

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[12]In her chapter "Pictorial Arts," Joan Grundy closely examines Hardy's painterly techniques. She notes a similarity between Hogarth and Hardy in Desperate Remedies. The disorderly home of Mrs. Higgins, herself "showing rather too much bosom," suggests a knowledge of Hogarth's work (29). But Grundy sees a closer link in Hardy's poetry: his "fondness for the 'Before and After' title, signifying the contrasting scenes the poem either paints or suggests" (38). Hardy and the Sister Arts (London: Macmillan, 1979).

"incendiary sermon" and lived very well thereafter.[13] As the cycle progresses, possessions are used to indicate the harlot's degeneration and declining fortunes. Plate 3 shows the harlot using a "Pastoral Letter" of Bishop Gibson for a butter dish, while in plate 5 the quarrelling doctors offer a choice between bottle and pill, a remedy for venereal disease. In Hogarth's cycles "the principal scene of an act prepares the way for the next"[14]; these principal scenes are panels or stages of representation making clear the gradual disintegration of the harlot.

In Jude the recurring scenes in which Jude sets up his housekeeping and gathers around himself the symbols of his new endeavours work in much the same way as Hogarth's scenes. But in Hogarth's work the dramatic scenes and vignettes between the principal scenes would be compressed into a single picture at each stage of Jude's life. The symbolic gestures in which Jude destroys possessions, rejecting his previous mode of life, would become emblems within the next picture: his wedding picture and his theological and ethical works would perhaps appear half-burnt in the fire-place. In the tradition of Hogarth, Hardy focuses on a particular protagonist surrounded by groups of people who are "at once naturalistically themselves and allegorically different stages of experience in the progress of an everyman."[15] The stages of Jude's life could be called "The Idealist's Progress," a cycle not illustrating that "the wages of sin are death," but rather that the

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[13]Ronald Paulson, Hogarth: His Life, Art, and Times, abr. ed. Anne Wilde (New Haven: Yale UP, 1974) 104-35.

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[14]Joseph Burke and Colin Caldwell, Hogarth: The Complete Engravings (London: Thames, 1968) 19.

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[15]Paulson 118.

"modern vice of unrest" brings spiritual and intellectual upheaval, so Jude is destined to live a life of disillusionment, poverty, and unfulfilled aims, and to find peace only in death.

Much has been made of the importance of perception in Jude. As Norman Page argues,

> Seeing...in its various literal and metaphoric forms and in its absence, pervades the novel at the level of both narrative and style. For Jude it is an activity executed with varying degrees of success at different stages in his history.[14]

Jude's ability to perceive clearly is linked to his desires. His tendency to idealize and thus to misperceive is made clear in the disparity between the two descriptions of Drusilla's cottage in Marygreen. Jude's great-aunt's home is described:

> Over the door was a little rectangular piece of blue board on which was painted in yellow letters, 'Drusilla Fawley, Baker.' Within the little lead panes of the window--this being one of the few old houses left--were five bottles of sweets, and three buns on a plate of the willow pattern. (51)

Drusilla's home is inimical to the young and sensitive Jude, who feels the glances of his aunt and her cronies "like slaps upon his face" (51). Jude finds freedom from the hostility of his immediate environment by moving to the bake house for his meal, and later to the pig-sty to meditate on his life and his experience in Farmer Troutham's field:

> Jude went out, and, feeling more than ever his existence to be an undemanded one, he lay down upon his back on a heap of litter near the pig-sty.... All around you there seemed to be something glaring, garish, rattling, and the noises and glares hit upon the little cell called your life, and shook it, and warped it. (57)

Gradually we become aware of the discrepancy between the description of Drusilla's brightly painted sign and quaint shop window and the life of the interior as Jude experiences it. As Enstice notes,

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[14]Page 86.

> Christminster changes and evolves in Jude's eyes, as his search for a way of life that to him seems real and worthwhile, whether study, religion, or love, changes his perceptions of its role and reality in life.[17]

So too does Drusilla's cottage change with Jude's changing perceptions. After Jude's trip to Brown House, when the image of Christminster gleamed like topaz (61), Drusilla's cottage is described:

> Inside and round about the old woman's 'shop' window, with its twenty-four little panes set in lead-work, the glass of some of them oxidized with age, so that you could hardly see the poor penny articles exhibited within, and forming part of a stock which a strong man could have carried, Jude had his outer being for some long tideless time. But his dreams were as gigantic as his surroundings were small. (62)

Page suggests that Jude's perception of Drusilla's cottage is a parallel to his perception of Christminster: "It was Christminster, unquestionably; either directly seen, or miraged in the peculiar atmosphere" (61):

> A mirage... in emotional terms act[s] as a source of false hopes and subsequent disappointments--and of such a nature Jude's experience of Christminster turns out to be; or it can be, in the words of the OED, 'the appearance in the sky of a reflected image of a distant object,' permitting a visual experience different from the customary one afforded by an object or scene substantial in itself.[18]

The first description of Drusilla's house is also a "mirage," an image reflecting the desires of an orphan boy, while the second reflects Jude's adjusted perceptions based on his experiences: the hostility of Drusilla's home and the emerging dream of Christminster with its seductive charms.

Throughout Jude's life, Christminster represents the unobtainable possession which could fulfill his spiritual needs: "It had been the

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[17]Enstice 154.

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[18]Page 16.

yearning of his heart to find something to anchor on, to cling to--for some place which he could call admirable" (65). What Jude is able to obtain is books, and at Marygreen books are his most notable possession. Books are intimately linked to his education, obviously as a means to gain knowledge, but they are also symbols of his aspirations and desires. The various books Jude acquires chart his changing perceptions about what is required to fulfill his dream. From the "little book of tales," Jude advances, on the advice of a carter and Dr. Vilbert, to Latin and Greek grammars which enable him to read the classics, but he discovers that such pagan literature is inappropriate for a Christian divine. Accordingly, he obtains "Griesbach's New Testament in Greek" and volumes of the fathers. But Jude's acquisition of books is an educational experience in itself, a measure of his developing self.

Jude's books are a part of the cycle of hopes and disappointments which mark his life.[11] In not obtaining books from Vilbert, Jude is plunged into a "period of blankness" (70) but soon recovers and shows more practical good sense in his next attempt by covertly slipping a letter inside the case of the pianoforte on its way to Phillotson. With the receipt of "two thin books," Jude is again disillusioned:

> [The Latin grammar] was an old one--thirty years old, soiled, scribbled wantonly over with a strange name in every variety of enmity to the letterpress, and marked at random with dates twenty years earlier than his own day. But this was not the cause of Jude's amazement. He learnt for the first time that there was no law of transmutation, as in his innocence he had supposed (there was, in some degree, but the grammarian did not recognize it), but that every word in both Latin and Greek was to be individually committed to memory at the cost of years of plodding. (71)

Having his childish idea, his hope for a Grimm's Law, demolished, Jude's

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[11]Page 85; Rosemary Sumner, Thomas Hardy: Psychological Novelist (London: Macmillan Press, 1981) 149.

immediate response is quite normal for a boy of his age: "he wished that he had never seen a book, that he might never see another, that he had never been born" (72). The shattering of his hopes often brings such responses, yet until his final loss of Sue, Jude shows remarkable resilience in overcoming his despair by renewing his efforts to give meaning to his life. Characteristically, Jude overcomes his initial despair at the study required and is stimulated by the challenge as a "means of still further glorifying the erudition of Christminster":

> To acquire languages, departed or living, in spite of such obstinacies as he now knew them inherently to possess, was a herculean performance which gradually led him on to greater interest in it than in the presupposed patent process. (73)

Ironically, Jude does not recognize that there is no law of transmutation which will ensure his admittance to Christminster's colleges.

Just as Christminster is a substitute for secure personal relationships, so too do Jude's books become a substitute. In the creaking bakery cart with a dictionary balanced on his knees, Jude delves into the classics in his old superseded Delphin editions:

> The hampered and lonely itinerant conscientiously covered up the marginal readings, and used them merely on points of construction, as he would have used a comrade or tutor who should have happened to be passing by. (74)

What is remarkable about Jude is his persistence, but also that he is not engulfed by the misery of his situation: his loneliness and the decidedly second-hand nature of his material world. His appreciation of books is not for their physical qualities, but rather for their usefulness to him and the knowledge they contain. Books are for him an inspiration. His reading of the 'Carmen Saeculare' inspires him to chant in Latin to the moon. At Christminster, Jude repopulates the quadrangles

of the colleges with the "sons of the University" (128), knowledge of them gained "from a book or two" on the subject; but he fails to recognize that Christminster is, as Arnold realized, "the home of lost causes" (128). Similarly, Jude does not recognize the significance of the verities embodied within his books: the ancient pages "already thumbed by hands possibly in the grave" (74). Nor does he see the pride of self, "the strange name" scribbled wantonly over the old Latin grammar "in every variety of enmity to the letterpress" (71) and the futility of hoping to find a stable and meaningful life through study embodied in the patristic literature "left behind by an insolvent clergyman" (76). Jude sees only his hopes for success.

Jude is abruptly awakened from his dream of learning by his awakening sexuality. This next stage of his maturity is vividly captured in Jude's unusually sensual perception of Arabella's home: the oozing brook, the smell of piggeries, and the "grunting of the originators of the smell" (87), and in his perception of his material world, most notably his Greek Testament ("with better type than his old copy, following Griesbach's text as amended by numerous correctors, and with variorum readings in the margin," which he had "boldly" attained by writing to its London publisher [86]). The "predestinate Jude" in his best clothes forsakes his re-reading of the text to meet Arabella, who awakens his sexuality and undermines his educational endeavours. His awareness of both aspects profoundly affects his perception of the furnishings of his room when he returns home:

> [A] general consciousness of his neglect seemed written on the face of all things confronting him. He went upstairs without a light, and the dim interior of his room accosted him with sad inquiry. There lay his book open, just as he had left it, and the capital letters on the title-page regarded him with fixed reproach in the grey starlight, like the unclosed eyes of a dead

man. (92)

As with Drusilla's home at Christminster, Jude's perception of the material world conveys his psychological state. He intensely feels the betrayal of the companionship of his book and his study for the companionship of a woman.

Jude's life is one of constant struggle in always attempting to make his homes sympathetic habitats. Aware that there always seemed to be "noises and glares hit[ting] upon the little cell called your life," Jude repeatedly attempts to adjust to the requirements of others and to his own needs. But his homes are either not entirely sympathetic or never sympathetic for long, as the two requirements are seldom compatible. Jude's life in Marygreen with his aunt is a time of expansion and growth for the "little cell" called life. He acquires his books as well as becoming a stone-mason's apprentice. And Jude's self flows into Drusilla's possessions. The little spot of black on his bedroom ceiling made by the smoke of his lamp (86) is indicative of his persistent studies. But more importantly for his immediate situation, he is able to make Drusilla's house more congenial in his attentions to her possessions:

> He had endeavoured to make his presence tolerable to his crusty maiden aunt by assisting her to the best of his ability, and the business of the little cottage bakery had grown in consequence. (73)

But Jude must adapt his studying accordingly, so the bakery cart becomes the scene of his "private study." Again he is forced to adapt as the citizens complain of his unorthodox combination of "work and play." The little spaces in which Jude is able to find some contentment are always beset by social pressures and his changing needs. The oddity of his dreams within his environment is made clear in the description of

Drusilla's cottage: "his dreams were as gigantic as his surroundings were small" (62). We are always aware of the incongruity between the life of the interior and that which contains it:[20] Jude's idealistic dreams and the social reality.

The home of the newly-married Jude and Arabella is much like Clym and Eustacia's home in their misconceptions about each other and the temporary nature of their residency. The differences between Arabella and Jude are expressed not so much in terms of where they live but how they want to live. The materialistic Arabella sees the potential purchasing power in Jude:

> [She] felt that all these makeshifts were temporary; she had gained a husband; that was the thing--a husband with a lot of earning power in him for buying her frocks and hats when he should begin to get frightened a bit, and stick to his trade, and throw aside those stupid books for practical undertakings. (103)

Like Eustacia in her attitude toward Clym's books, Arabella sees Jude's as a barrier in her pursuit of a better life. Frocks and hats are rather trivial emblems of material wealth and social advancement. Jude's idea of self-advancement is intellectual: to "accumulate ideas, and impart them to others" (480). Jude's awareness of their immediate needs controls his decision of where they should live:

> His wife was absolutely useless in a town-lodging, where he had at first considered it would be necessary for them to live. But the urgent need of adding to income in ever so little a degree

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[20]Another incongruity between shell and interior is Jude himself. Before his death he remarks to Arabella,

> I was never really stout enough for the stone trade, particularly the fixing. Moving blocks always used to strain me.... But I always felt I could do one thing if I had the opportunity. I could accumulate ideas and impart them to others. (480)

The sturdiness of Jude's mind is contrasted with the fragility of his corporeal being.

> caused him to take a lonely roadside cottage between the Brown House and Marygreen, that he might utilize her past experiences by letting her keep a pig. But it was not the sort of life he bargained for, and it was a long way to walk to and from Alfredston every day. (103)

Jude is practical in his attention to their daily needs, but Arabella does not realize this.

In a letter to Jude before her departure for Australia, Arabella informs Jude of her decision to leave him:

> That she had grown tired of him she frankly admitted. He was such a slow old coach and she did not care for the sort of life he led. There was no prospect of his ever bettering himself or her. (117)

Cottage life turns out to be a period of disillusionment for each. But the disillusionment is much more severe for Jude as the mistake of his marriage and the character of Arabella are gradually, and quite painfully, revealed to him. Appropriately, in two bedroom scenes the repeated image of the vain Arabella at her mirror, with her artificial hair and her dimple excercise, reflects how little Jude knows about her, but also his naivety. Even more importantly, the scenes reflect the frail foundations of the marriage in the revelation of the fundamental error of their union, the mistaken pregnancy. Jude acutely perceives the injustice:

> There seemed to him, vaguely and dimly, something wrong in a social ritual, which made necessary a cancelling of well-formed schemes involving years of thought and labour, of foregoing a man's one opportunity of showing himself superior to the lower animals, and of contributing his units of work to the general progress of his generation, because of a momentary surprise by a new and transitory instinct which had nothing in it of the nature of vice. (107)

The bedroom scenes emphasize several of the fundamental differences between the two: Jude's honesty and naivety and Arabella's artifice and knowledge of the ways of the world. Prior to their marriage, Jude found

it necessary to console himself about his impending marriage:

> For his own soothing he kept a factitious belief in her. His idea of her was the thing of most consequence, not Arabella herself, he sometimes said laconically. (102)

But on a daily basis, the "idea" of her gives way to the reality of her.

Other areas of their home are used as locations for scenes in which other differences are made clear. The garden is the scene of the pig-killing. Jude is for scalding, while Arabella prefers singeing (108). As Enstice notes, the killing of the pig is the high point of their married life and becomes a matter of horror. The scene is one in which the cruel requirements of life are made vivid in the animal's cries and agonizing death.[11] Arabella's attitude to the spilt blood and the botched slaughter is one of waste in material terms. But for Jude the whole spectacle is horrific. The pig is not merely a possession, but a living creature that he and Arabella have betrayed:

> Jude felt dissatisfied with himself as a man at what he had done, though aware of his lack of common-sense, and that the deed would have amounted to the same thing if carried out by deputy. The white snow, stained with the blood of his fellow-mortal, wore an illogical look to him as a lover of justice, not to say a Christian... (111-12)

Arabella, the "substantial female animal" (81), is a survivor because she ruthlessly participates in the animal law of survival, while Jude's humanity elevates him from this level of cruelty. The stain on the snow becomes a symbol of his guilt.

The final scene of their married life in the cottage is appropriately next to their hearth. The horror of the pig-killing follows Jude in a material way as Arabella tosses Jude's "dear ancient classics" on the floor:

In the operation of making lard Arabella's hands had become

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[11]Enstice 157.

> smeared with hot grease, and her fingers consequently left very perceptible imprints on the book-covers. (114)

In the impressions of Arabella's greasy fingers are Jude's horror of the pig-killing and of his marriage. He is disgusted as he sees his ideal of education being stained by the realities of his life with Arabella. As we follow Jude and Arabella through their home, the journey charts Jude's increasing awareness of their fundamental differences and the instability of their life together. But they are standing in the road when their marriage suffers its collapse as Jude is "[i]lluminated with the sense that all was over between them" (115).

This journey is one of the many set within the larger framework of Jude's quest for a meaningful life and his growing awareness of the realities of his social world. At the end of this phase of his life, Jude jettisons that which is no longer meaningful to him. He generously gives Arabella his worldly goods, with the exception of his books. It is Arabella who casts off Jude, as her letter to him indicates, but the "utter death of every tender sentiment in his wife" (119) is made concrete when Jude discovers his portrait in a broker's shop:

> It was the one which he had had specially taken and framed by a local man in bird's-eye maple, as a present for Arabella, and had duly given to her on their wedding-day. On the back was still to be read, '<u>Jude to Arabella</u>,' with the date. She must have thrown it in with the rest of her property at the auction. (118)

Arabella's characteristic gesture is to reduce people to objects of usefulness; Jude becomes a piece of cast-off domestic goods. Jude's gesture of burning the portrait, frame and all, is symbolic of the death of his sentiments for Arabella and is also emblematic of the end of this stage of his life. But it also suggests an attempt to destroy that part of himself which he gave to Arabella and which entrapped him, his

sexuality. As Hardy points out in his preface, the novel deals with the "deadly war waged between spirit and flesh" (39). Jude again directs his course towards the fulfillment of his spiritual desires.

In the Christminster section, Jude's spiritual needs are reflected in his possessions. To furnish his "room in a suburb nick-named 'Beersheba'" (125), Jude acquires the standard scholarly appurtenances: shaded lamp, pens, paper, and books. Jude's priorities and the poverty of his circumstances are aptly noted in what he cannot afford: "after buying a book or two he could not even afford himself a fire" (134). He receives from Drusilla a portrait of Sue: the "photograph of a pretty girlish face, in a broad hat with radiating folds under the brim like the rays of a halo" (124), which is the catalyst in his immediate removal to Christminster to follow Phillotson's footsteps towards a university degree:

> [J]ude put the photograph on the mantel piece, kissed it--he did not know why--and felt more at home. She seemed to look down and preside over his tea. It was cheering--the one thing uniting him to the emotions of a living city. (132)

Jude's yearnings for companionship are touchingly caught in his impulsive act as he proceeds to make his room a home. Many parallels exist between Jude's and Phillotson's lives. Jude's gentle response to Sue's picture is a marked contrast to Phillotson's response to the one he possesses:

> [He kissed] the dead paste-board with all the passionateness, and more than all the devotion, of a young man of eighteen. (217)

Like Boldwood, who also lags behind in the season of love, Phillotson is extreme in his devotion to his beloved. For both Jude and Phillotson, Sue becomes a necessary ingredient in their happiness--a companion who can bring meaning to their lives. In making his lodgings a home, Jude

hangs up a thick blind on the window, "That nobody should know how he was curtailing the hours of his sleep" (133), and rigs up a curtain across the middle of the room to make a double chamber out of one: one room for living and sleeping and one for study. Although his landlady's reaction is "consternation" at the oddity of his arrangement, Jude has discovered in his 'private study' in the bakery cart and his life with Arabella that the two worlds should be separate. In the eyes of society, Jude's pursuits have been odd combinations: in the bakery cart, "work and play" and in his cottage the necessities of married life and unpractical books. The curtain and blind are to protect his study from social interference. But, as he has also learned in his life with Arabella, the "idea" is changed by the realities of life. To preserve his dream, he creates a secluded study shutting out the social world and enclosing his educational pursuits within his abode. The curtain is indicative of his delusion that domestic realities and his dream can be separate, but also creates a spatial representation of the tensions in his life: on the one side his blind idealism of study and his hope for a law of transmutation, that which would make his "calling and election sure to a seat in the paradise of the learned" (163), and on the other side his growing love for Sue.

The Christminster section is dominated by Jude's changing perception of Christminster and his place within the social world. As a physical presence, Christminster is made concrete as Jude perceives the spires, pinnacles, windows, and walls. Although Jude is aware of the rottenness of the walls and senses that "something barbaric loomed in the masonries of all" (130), he still regards Christminster in an inspirational light:

> From his window he could perceive the spire of the Cathedral, and the ogee dome under which resounded the great bell of the city. The tall tower, tall belfry windows, and tall pinnacles of the college by the bridge he could also get a glimpse of by going to the staircase. These objects he used as stimulants when his faith in the future was dim. (134)

As Enstice notes, the "self-delusion of Jude is all too apparent in the horridly prosaic necessity of having to go to the staircase to catch a glimpse of windows and pinnacles."[32] Jude will not allow himself to see the futility of his efforts or the philosophies built into the crumbling masonries and the outmoded buildings. He perceives the distance between himself and his educational desires in terms of the college's walls:

> Only a wall divided him from those happy young contemporaries of his with whom he shared a common mental life; men who had nothing better to do from morning till night but to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest. Only a wall--but what a wall! (132)

What he fails to understand is the implications of the geographical separation between his wall in Beersheba and the walls of the colleges. Geographical distance represents the social polarities of their worlds, a fact which becomes painfully clear to Jude as he views the city from Wren's Theatre.

The pathos of Jude's situation is also made clear in the letter he receives from the Master of Biblioll College. As Gregor indicates, the letter is addressed to "Mr. J. Fawley, Stone-Mason":

> For the Master, Jude is not there as a person but as a trade, a trade which could not seek to go beyond the walls it is committed to restoring.[33]

One of the sadistic tricks played on Jude is this relationship between Jude's craft and his pursuit of education. Millgate notes that in the stone-mason's yard, Hardy establishes "the ironies implicit in Jude's

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[32]Enstice 161.

[33]Gregor 212-13.

quest, in his rejection of that valuable possession his craftsmanship for the sake of a false grail." Millgate identifies the most significant irony:

> [T]he way in which Jude's trade is one which ties him to old buildings, churches, and graveyards--to the restoration of the past and the perpetuation of precisely those influences and traditions which bar his educational and social aspirations and menace the privacy of his life with Sue.[34]

For a man like Jude, mere "copying, patching, and imitating" cannot be fulfilling.

Jude's lodgings in Melchester show the change in his search for a way of life that will be meaningful. When his dreams of Christminster are shattered, the prospect of a new endeavour, "the ecclesiastical and altruistic life," brings him out of his abyss. But, characteristically, it takes a passionate letter from Sue to prompt him towards Melchester. Dutifully Jude acquires that which is appropriate to his endeavour:

> His combined bed and sitting room was furnished with framed photographs of the rectories and deaneries at which his land-lady had lived as trusted servant in her time.... Jude added to the furniture in his room by unpacking photographs of the ecclesiastical carvings and monuments that he had executed with his own hands.... As a relaxation from the Fathers and such stock works as Paley and Butler, he read Newman, Pusey, and many of the modern lights. He hired a harmonium, set it up in his lodging, and practised chants thereon, single and double. (188)

For someone who has shown himself to be different from the social world, the compatible mixture of Jude's and his landlady's possessions, as well as her pronouncement that "he was deemed a satisfactory acquisition as a tenant," strikes an ironic note, signalling the discord between Jude and his possessions as symbols of a new endeavour. Like Christminster before it, as Enstice points out, "Melchester Cathedral becomes the misty

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[34]Millgate 330-31.

symbol of a new idea":[25]

> The lofty building was visible as far as the roof-ridge; above, the dwindling spire rose more and more remotely till its apex was quite lost in the mist drifting across it. (183)

Again Jude deludes himself that his goal is desirable and obtainable, taking it as a "good omen" that the cathedral is undergoing extensive restoration and repair.

What is remarkable about the room is its lack of humanity: the lifeless photographs of buildings, carvings, and monuments. Even Jude's calculated reading and music practice are dull and lifeless. What is missing in his adode is a sense of the passion and vitality with which he undertook to set up housekeeping in Christminster, and the photograph of Sue which had cheered him and presided over his tea. Enstice argues that seriousness is the chief characteristic conveyed in the room:

> All sense of reality is removed from the scene, as the masonry becomes an enshrined symbol of religious belief--bringing with it its own atmosphere of decay, gathering the hierarchy of the church into itself by association and, with an utter seriousness of language, reflecting Jude's own seriousness of purpose.[26]

There is a definite sense of Jude's determination, but the scene is also devoid of the depth of feeling which marked his academic pursuit. Jude's new seriousness of purpose and the absence of Sue's picture are a part of his new delusion. Before leaving Christminster, Jude resolved that "To keep Sue Bridehead was a desire which operated without regard of consequences" (152). His failure to place her picture among the symbols of religious beliefs indicates his serious intentions towards his religious endeavour, yet it also becomes a part of his self-delusion that he can control his passion for Sue and his need for intimacy. When

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[25]Enstice 163.

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[26]Enstice 164.

Jude returns Sue to the Training School, she offers him "a new little photograph" of herself, and his acceptance is enthusiastic:"'Would I!' He took it gladly" (192). With his acceptance, Jude is helplessly committed to Sue; it is simply a matter of time before Jude realizes his inability to pursue his religious endeavour.

Characteristically, the end of this phase of Jude's life is marked by his methodical destruction of that which is no longer meaningful:

> [H]e went into the garden and dug a shallow hole, to which he brought out all the theological and ethical works that he possessed, and had stored [in Marygreen].... Lighting some loose pamphlets to begin with, he cut the volumes into pieces as well as he could, and with a three-pronged fork shook them over the flames. (279)

Aware of the glaring inconsistencies in his life, Jude refuses to be a hypocrite. Similarly, in a defiant gesture reminiscent of Becky Sharp's tossing the dictionary out of the carriage window as she departs from Miss Pinkerton's academy, Arabella divests herself of the symbols of a moral system she cannot adhere to:

> Arabella had hastily drawn from her pocket a bundle of [religious] tracts which she had brought with her to distribute at the fair, and of which she had given away several. As she spoke she flung [from the coach] the whole remainder of the packet into the hedge. 'I've tried that sort o' physic and have failed with it. I must be as I was born!' (386-7)

Although she lacks the finesse of Becky's self-seeking ways, Arabella is at times an actress; nevertheless, she refuses to be a hypocrite. All of the major characters are in varying degrees conscious symbol-users. In rejecting the religious life, both Arabella and Jude acknowledge and accept their passionate nature. But of course there are also personal reasons: Arabella does so with her eye firmly fixed on Jude, scheming to get him back after he has begun his life with Sue, while Jude looks forward to a relationship with Sue.

Although she resorts to trickery and deception, Arabella is an open book, but Sue remains something of an enigma, with her private thoughts and unexplained actions. Sue's possessions are intimately linked to the mystery of Sue, that which Jude tries desperately to understand: the plaster statuettes of Apollo and Venus and a rosewood box containing personal possessions--books and photographs. Sue's cluster of appurtenances is also emblematic of her nature and symbolic of her idealistic notions of a meaningful way of life.

In the Christminster section, Hardy economically foreshadows the dramatic revelations of Sue's character with the two statuettes, which are appropriate to her aesthetic, her appreciation of beauty and disposition towards the classical. But Apollo represents much that is frustrating about Sue. A passage from Classical Mythology identifies the facets of Apollo's character:

> He sums up in his very nature the multiple contradictions in the tragic dilemma of human experience. He is gentle and vehement, compassionate and ruthless, guilty and guiltless, healer and destroyer. The extremes of his emotions are everywhere apparent.[27]

Apollo is a very appropriate emblem of Sue's nature, as her bundle of contradictions does indeed encompass those cited. Her contrariness is displayed in every move she makes: changing residences, lovers, and beliefs, as well as her patterns of communication.[28] It is the opposition between healer and destroyer which proves fatal for Jude when Sue returns to Phillotson to ease her conscience.

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[27]Mark Morford and Robert Lenardon, Classical Mythology, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1971) 166.

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[28]As Sumner points out, in her discussions with Jude and Phillotson, Sue "switches from discussion to emotion as soon as they verge on any criticism of herself." (Sumner 178).

The Venus is appropriate to Sue's inflaming the desires of others while remaining chaste herself. Despite the Training School's regulations about pictures, Sue displays the portraits of Phillotson and the undergraduate: "two men in their filigree and velvet frames standing beside her looking-glass" (194). Hardy uses the traditional signal of vanity, the mirror, but the juxtaposition of mirror and photographs is the key. When Sue sees herself in the mirror in Arabella's hotel room, "the sight of her own fresh charms in the looking-glass made Sue's manner bright till she realized what a meanly sexual emotion this was in her, and hated herself for it" (334).[39] Sue's vanity is intellectual, elevating herself above the earthly desires of the flesh. Her vanity is displayed in her intellectualizing of her emotions as well as in her displays of knowledge. Dressed in Jude's garments after her escape from the training school, Sue ponders her wet clothes drying in front of the fire:

> 'I suppose it is odd that you should see me like this and all my things hanging there? Yet what nonsense! They are only a woman's clothes--sexless cloth and linen.' (198)

In Sue's philosophizing, she depersonalizes her clothing as a referent to her self, but also begins to make the point that clothing as indicative of sex does not matter in their relationship. Speaking of her desires to Jude, Sue says:

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[39]The incident of the mirror also reveals Sue's streak of narcissism, which is also evident to a degree in Jude and Arabella. As R. D. McMaster notes,

> In Sue's case especially... one is very conscious of her, as it were, watching herself in fascination to see how she is taking exotic sensations. They are all three, whether testing their own pain or inflicting pain on others, connoisseurs of sensibility.

R. D. McMaster, "Centre and Periphery: A [illegible]ythmical Motif in Jude the Obscure," Dalhousie Review 58 (Summer 1978): 270.

> 'But I did want and long to ennoble some man to high aims; and when I saw you, and knew you wanted to be my comrade, I--shall I confess it?--thought that man might be you.' (207)

Sue's ideal way of life, her concept of ennoblement, is analogous to Venus in not yielding to sexual intimacy, yet forcing others to submit to her will. Sue avoids sex with men, not because of a fanatic purity, but because she likes them as "comrades."

Photographs identify various love relationships and are indicative of a range of needs in the responses they evoke and of temperaments in the way these possessions are treated. Sue freely gives pictures of herself as tokens to attract Phillotson and Jude owing to her "love of being loved" (305) and gathers around her the evidence that she is loved. Unlike Arabella, who tosses out Jude's photograph with their separation, Sue is a sentimentalist. Like Jude, who gently kisses his cousin's photograph, and Phillotson, who passionatly kisses his fiancee's picture, Sue bestows affection on one of her pictures. After visiting Sue in Shaston, Jude watches her through the window at Old-Grove Place:

> She had opened a rosewood work-box, and was looking at a photograph. Having contemplated it a little while she pressed it against her bosom, and put it again in the right place.... He had once given her his; but she had others, he knew. Yet it was his surely. (267)

A nice touch in creating a cliff-hanger, but the scene also reinforces the ambiguity about Sue's ability to reciprocate love and about the strength of her sexual desires. Sue repeatedly argues that she is passionate,[30] yet she can only be affectionate and exchange endearments

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[30]One such passage occurs when she tells Jude of her relationship with the undergraduate:

> 'People say I must be cold-natured,--sexless on account of it. But I won't have it! Some of the most passionately erotic poets

when she is protected, by the barrier of a wall as she speaks to Jude from a window, by distance when communicating with him in a letter, or, as in the case of the kiss at Marygreen, by cousinship and her return to Old-Grove Place. Sue's desire for comradeship places her in a defensive position. In a letter to Gosse, Hardy insisted that the sexual instinct in Sue "is healthy as far as it goes, but is unusually weak and fastidious."[31] Sue is a striking contrast to Arabella who is quite the Wife of Bath in her attentiveness to her strong sexual desires.

With Jude's commitment to Sue and the beginning of their life together, Sue herself becomes his symbol of a new endeavour, and it is their relationship as they begin their life together which becomes the focus. It is their sleeping arrangements which intrude into their blissful union. As Sue demands two hotel rooms, Jude's mistaken assumption that they are to live as man and wife is made clear. Adapting himself to the needs of Sue, Jude does not pressure her into sharing a bedroom. At Aldbrickham, where they live "with only a landing between them" (325), the separation is part of Sue's delusion that Jude can continue to live in such close proximity and love her, yet continue to sleep apart. It is Arabella, "a fleshy coarse woman," who prompts Sue into turning the separation into closeness. At the Great Wessex Fair, Sue and Jude are at their happiest:

> Sue, in her new summer clothes, flexible and light as a bird, her little thumb stuck up by the stem of her white cotton sunshade, went along as if she hardly touched the ground.... Jude, in his light grey holiday-suit, was really proud of her companionship, not more for her external attractiveness than for her sympathetic words and ways. The complete mutual understanding, in which every glance and movement was as

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[30](cont'd) have been the most self-contained in their daily lives.' (203)

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[31]Quoted in Millgate 321.

> effectual as speech for conveying intelligence between them, made them almost the two parts of a single whole. (360-61)

At the fair, as Millgate notes, the positive aspects of their comradeship receive their strongest celebration, and there is a momentary upward movement in their lives.[32] But it is also the high point of their delusion that they can be, as Arabella observes, "the only two in the show." The extent of their folly is clearly conveyed in Sue's ecstatic account of their lives:

> I feel that we have returned to Greek joyousness, and have blinded ourselves to sickness and sorrow, and have forgotten what twenty-five centuries have taught the race since their time, as one of your Christminster luminaries says.... There is one immediate shadow, however,--only one. (366)

Little Father Time is the voice of sombre reality as he replies, "I should like the flowers very much, if I didn't keep on thinking they'd all be withered in a few days." A reversal of roles occurs which is to produce devastating results. Unable to live in the world except on their own terms, Jude and Sue are childish in their disregard of both the present and the future.

Life at Aldbrickham is ruined by the possession which they do not have: a marriage certificate. Although Sue gives in to sexual intimacy, the ugliness of the registry office--its muddy footmarks, notices of marriage on the wall, law books in musty calf, post office directories, bundles of papers pigeon-holed around, and the ill-assorted couples to be wed--offends Jude and Sue, who see clearly the grimy aspects, but fail to perceive the consequences of their actions. At the church, Sue thinks that the flowers in the bride's hands look "like the garlands which decked the heifers of sacrifice in old times" (355). A sacrifice to society's traditional rules of conduct is not something Sue, who

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[32]Millgate 328.

despises religion and the imprisoning effects of tradition, can partake in. Jude is against their marriage because of the "queer sort of people" they are: "folk in whom domestic ties of a forced kind snuff out cordiality and spontaneousness" (354). At Aldbrickham, the incongruity between the facade they present to the social world as a married couple and the reality of their life unhouses them, making their attempt at a private life futile. Minor characters, as Enstice observes, are "occasionally used to fulfill a function of wider social attribute." Jude and Sue are made to suffer the gossip and the self-righteous attitudes of the nameless figures around them, notably the Artizan's Mutual Improvement society and the old woman who secures Jude's dismissal from church repairs. Enstice adds,

> These well-meaning, upright people form, in their amorphous mass, part of the new landscapes of the mind. They are the bigotry of society at large, which survives by destroying all incipient aberration within itself.[33]

The futility of Jude and Sue's attempt to find a retreat from the world is made clear when they try to avoid the unpleasantness of their auction by fleeing to an upstairs room:

> Their door was tried once or twice, and to guard against intrusion Jude wrote 'Private' on a scrap of paper, and stuck it upon the panel.... At length the auction began in the room below, whence they could hear each familiar article knocked down, the highly prized ones cheaply, the unconsidered at an unexpected price. (375)

Clinging to their ideal life and refusing to conform, the couple are further reduced in their nomadic life. As sentimentalists, Jude and Sue are not in step with the world of materialists; consequently, the auction becomes increasingly painful as the voice of the auctioneer filters through the floor when their prized possessions come up for

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[33]Enstice 72.

sale: Jude's great grandfather's oak settle--"a unique example of old English furniture, worthy the attention of all collectors!" (377); Sue's pet birds--"now the next lot: two pairs of pigeons, all alive and plump--a nice pie for somebody for next Sunday's dinner!" (377). Just as the buildings in Marygreen, rich in history and human associations, are pulled down, so too are Jude and Sue deprived of their past. Jude intensely feels the pain of being cut off from his family history, but characteristically Sue feels the loss of her immediate past. Her impulsive act in setting the birds free is an example of her affinities with Jude, as she also questions the cruel requirements of life: "O why should Nature's law be mutual butchery!" (378). The bird incident prefigures their life together as they pursue their illusory freedom.

Jude's model of Cardinal College and his Christminster cakes indicate his nostalgia for his original dream, besides being evidence of their declining fortunes: the model a hobby, the cakes an occupation. Seeing the cakes, Arabella is quick to give her opinion:

> Of course Christminster is a sort of fixed vision with him, which I suppose he'll never be cured of believing in. He still thinks it a great centre of high and fearless thought, instead of what it is, a nest of commonplace school masters whose characteristic is timid obsequiousness to tradition. (383)

The colleges are not a "fixed vision" for him. His perceptions of Christminster change as he becomes aware of the futility of his efforts. What is "fixed" is the idea that Jude clings to, that the gaining of knowledge and imparting it to others could have been a meaningful life. Father Time becomes a surrogate for Jude's ambition:

> We'll educate and train him with a view to the University. What I couldn't accomplish in my own person perhaps I can carry out through him? (345)

The arrival of Father Time reactivates Jude's ideas of a university

education, but the model and cakes are clues that Jude has not found complete fulfillment in his life with Sue. Therefore, it is not surprising when Jude advises Sue of his desire to return to Christminster:

> I love the place--although I know how it hates all men like me--the so-called Self-taught.... Nevertheless, it is the centre of the universe to me, because of my early dream: and nothing can alter it. (391)

In Christminster, at this stage of their nomadic life in search of a temporary place to rest, space becomes much more of a problem. Although Jude has realized that he will be "an outsider to the end of his days" as far as his dream of his education is concerned, he finds the possibilty of lodgings on Mildew Lane "irresistible" because of their close proximity to the colleges: "only a thickness of wall divided them" (402). Jude's ruling passion blinds him to the needs of his family: the price is more than they can afford, the children are forced to sleep in a closet, and, ironically, Jude must find lodgings elsewhere. Nonetheless, Jude is still "pleased to find that the window commanded the back of another of the colleges" (403). Sue's reaction is different. Looking at the scene outside the window, she is conscious of her physical surroundings, while the deathly countenance of Jude's dream imposes its presence within:

> [T]he outer walls of Sarcophagus College--silent, black, and windowless--threw their four centuries of gloom, bigotry, and decay into the little room she occupied... Even now [Jude] did not distinctly hear the freezing negative that those scholared walls had echoed to his desire. (406)

In Jude's Beersheba lodging he had hung a shade upon the window to create a secluded retreat, but here there can be no retreat, as the college imposes its presence through the uncurtained window. Nor can it be a retreat, because they are given an eviction notice before they are

settled. Their homelessness, without shelter for the entire family and some security for future shelter, is an intolerable situation and the major motive for Father Time's murdering the children and his suicide. Hardy uses spatial arrangements--the college outside and the separation of Jude from his family and of Sue from the children in the closet--to stress the absurdity of their situation, but also to indicate a chain of cause and effect, of the blindness to the needs of the next in the chain, which culminates in Father Time's assuming the role of executioner. Sue's indifference to the needs of Father Time is caught in the child's note: "Done because we are too menny." But, appropriately, it is Father Time who becomes the horrific emblem of their lives:

> The boy's face expressed the whole tale of their situation. On that little shape had converged all the inauspiciousness and shadow which had darkened the first union of Jude, and all the accidents, mistakes, fears, errors of the last. He was their nodal point, their focus, their expression in a single term. For the rashness of those parents he had groaned, for their ill-assortment he had quaked, and for the misfortunes of these he had died. (411)

Hardy uses clothing to indicate Jude and Sue's developing comradeship, their "two-in-oneness." After receiving the news that their divorces had been granted, Sue put on "a joyful coloured gown in observance of her liberty; seeing which Jude put on a lighter tie" (322). At the Great Wessex Fair, Sue and Jude in their light coloured summer clothes are "almost two parts of a single whole" (361). With the death of their children, Hardy uses clothes to indicate their ability to cope with their situation: "Jude in black crape, she in brown and red clothing" (415). Rushing to the grave, Sue forgets to change into mourning clothes. Her forgetfulness is an index of her grief, but is also a subtle signal of the differences in their natures which will sever their union. Sue's response to the deaths is much more severe:

> 'Yes.... O my comrade, our perfect union--our two-in-oneness--is now stained by blood!'
> 'Shadowed by death--that's all,' [Jude replied] (412).

Sue is reduced to a "heap of black clothes" on the floor of St. Silas Church (425) as she adopts a harsh form of Christianity to cope with her frantic guilt.

The end of their life together is marked by a symbolic gesture. Sue tortures Jude with the revelation that their relationship began because of her need to be loved and with her demand to live apart. Jude's anger and frustration are caught in his symbolic gesture:

> 'Then let the veil of our temple be rent in two from this hour!' He went to the bed, removed one of the pillows there-on, and flung it to the floor. (430)

In Jude's gesture is the acknowledgement that he may have spoiled their union with his sexual needs and that he assents to her wishes. On the night before she is to re-marry Phillotson, Sue enacts her symbolic gesture of guilt and severance by destroying the pretty embroidered nightgown bought to please Jude:

> She took it, and began rending with all her might, the tears resounding through the house like a screech-owl... Sue excitedly continued to tear the linen strips, laying the pieces in the fire. (441)

Sue's gesture is much harsher as a result of her rigid Christianity and her frantic guilt, but also more far-reaching. The destruction of the fancy nightgown and its replacement with "a new and absolutely plain garment, of coarse and unbleached calico" appropriately captures her idea of self-renunciation; she becomes Jude's destroyer and Phillotson's healer. In the eyes of society, Phillotson's reclamation of Sue rights the error of his allowing her to live with Jude. However, his reclamation masks a severe moral degeneration.

At this stage of Jude's decline, his idealism demonstrates the atrophy of his hopes of finding a meaningful life. Jude's re-marriage to Arabella is a parody of Sue's creed-drunk willingness to re-marry Phillotson. Urged into a drunken stupor by Arabella, who emerges from her shadowy position to reclaim Jude by gaining control of his purse, Jude weds her while the butcher shop is prepared for their return:

> [The guests'] eyes followed the movements of the little girl as she spread the breakfast cloth on the table they had been using without wiping out the slops of the liquor. (462)

Jude is forced into marriage as a point of honour: "I have never behaved dishonourably to a woman or to any living thing. I am not a man who wants to save himself at the expense of the weaker among us!" (461). But the absurdity of Jude's sense of honour amidst his squalid conditions and in the social world is vividly rendered in the "slops of the liquor" covered over by the breakfast cloth.

On his final trip to see Sue, Jude is a rather pathetic image of determination in his "long great-coat and blanket ... but without an umbrella" (467). Being reduced to only two desires in this world, "to see a particular woman, and then to die" (472), Jude selects clothing to provide immediate warmth, but the lack of an umbrella ensures his decline into death. The childish image of Jude with his blanket is also a summary of his life. As Page points out,

> [Jude] is a worker in stone, a maker of churches and houses; yet he also builds castles in the air (his great-aunt observes that, as a child, he had a trick 'of seeming to see things in the air'), and his yearning to forsake substantial buildings for ethereal ones is at the root of his misfortunes. The bitterness of his defeat lies in his belated recognition that Christminster is a sham... as unworthy of his longings and efforts as Sue is (as he tells her in his agony the last time he sees her) 'not worth a man's love.'[34]

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[34]Page 88.

Jude cannot find shelter in the airy castles of his imaginings, nor is he a part of the social world, as he refuses to accept his place in the shabby purlieu. After his journey, Jude quotes Antigone: "I am neither a dweller amongst men nor ghosts" (474); but the ironies of his life draw to a conclusion as the idealist dies alone on Remembrance Day with the cheers of the crowd rolling through the open windows while he recites the curses of Job. But the last scene of the novel is one in which the defeated Jude has at least found peace, as death is the only escape from the spiritual and intellectual anxieties of his life. The symbols of his original dream stand as mute testimony of his constancy:

> [T]here seemed to be a smile of some sort upon the marble features of Jude; while the old, superseded, Delphin editions of Virgil and Horace, and the dog-eared Greek Testament on the neighbouring shelf, and a few other volumes of the sort he had not parted with, roughened with stone-dust where he had been in the habit of catching them up for a few minutes between his labours, seemed to pale to a sickly cast at the sounds. (490)

The Delphin editions and Greek Testament had been Jude's earliest companions; it is appropriate that they are the final symbols of his endeavour to find a meaningful life, and of the defeat of that endeavour.

The series of vignettes at the various stages of Jude's life, from Marygreen to his return to Christminster, is Hogarthian in the abundant ironies of circumstance: the images of Jude in his residences at Marygreen, Christminster, Melchester, and back at Christminster surrounded by the symbols of his endeavours, while outside the walls or through the window looms the symbolic image of his desired goal, an image which indicates the futility of his efforts and foreshadows his disillusionment. These symbolic images are: the topaz glow of Christminster; spires, pinnacles, and battlements above the crumbling

masonry and outmoded design of the colleges; the lofty spire of Melchester atop a decaying building; the imposing presence of Sarcophogus College; and the joyous crowds on Remembrance Day whose cheers roll over the dying words of Jude. In Jude's nomadic life with Sue, their unheeding bliss is conveyed in the image of their "two-in-oneness" while the shadowy figure of Arabella and the scornful public look on. As in The Rake's Progress and The Harlot's Progress, Jude's life is set against a rich tapestry of life which contains, as Enstice points out, a series of recurring figures and numerous non-recurring figures, who are individuals and yet often fulfill a wider symbolic function as the alienating and cruel forces of an inhuman world.[34] Out of this lot of minor characters, the Widow Edlin is like the faithful servant in The Harlot's Progress in her concern for the protagonist.

In The Rake's Progress, Tom Rakewell is reduced to nothingness in Bedlam as a result of his desire to imitate the aristocracy, high society. Similarly, Hackabout in The Harlot's Progress is ruined by her folly. Falling prey to Mother Needham, the harlot becomes a member of the seamy side of society. The portraits of Macheath and Sacheverell are emblematic of her emulation of the "false" ideals offered by the "great" in her society. Jude's symbols of his endeavours are for him false ideals, since he is unable to find in them a meaningful way of life. Religion is a moral system he cannot adhere to, while Sue is not worth his love. But it is Jude's early desire to emulate Phillotson and the scholarly life within the colleges--or, as Arabella puts it, in "the centre of high and fearless thought" (383)--which is central to his

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[34]Enstice 170-72.

tragedy. But Jude is not simply an imitator. His pursuit of a meaningful life is a struggle to express his individuality, to find a way of life which embodies his interests and fulfills his needs and desires. Jude's persistent desire for knowledge and his desire to pass it on to others, as well as his integrity and humanity, set him apart from the social world, a world which thwarts his spiritual needs. Jude's life, "The Idealist's Progress," is a cycle illustrating that the "modern vice of unrest" brings spiritual and intellectual upheaval, as Jude is destined to live a life of disillusionment, poverty, and unfulfilled aims, and to find peace only in death.

Conclusion

Isolation and alienation become increasingly predominant themes which Hardy dramatizes in the major characters' inability to express the self and thus to find a suitable home, domestic or social. In his poem "Architectural Masks," Hardy contrasts two homes--an ivied mansion with dwellers who "daily dote on gold" and a gleaming villa with a family cultured in the arts--to suggest difficulties arising from the failure to convey one's self in an appropriate habitation:

> The philosophic passers say,
> 'See that old mansion mossed and fair,
> Poetic souls therein are they:
> And O that gaudy box! Away
> You vulgar people there.'[1]

The incongruity between shell and self appears in Far from the Madding Crowd with Troy, who sees renovation as a means to make Bathsheba's farmhouse the right kind of shell for him, but is a much more insistent problem in The Return of the Native and Jude the Obscure. Eustacia and Jude suffer from their inability to express satisfactorily the self of their imaginations, the cause of much of their discontent and the tragedy of their lives. But Jude and Sue's wilful use of an architectural mask to project the facade of a married couple makes them vulnerable to the rebukes of "philosophic passers" as they try to resist social conformity.

Life is necessarily lived with properties and possessions, and Hardy uses this fact to convey much about the individuality of his characters as they gather around them that which is meaningful. Expressive things range from the houses they inhabit to the relics,

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[1]Thomas Hardy in The Complete Poems of Thomas Hardy, ed. James Gibson (London: Macmillan, 1967) 160-61.

accessories, and personal emblems they possess. In an 1889 entry in the Life, Hardy writes:

> In time one might get to regard every object, and every action, as composed, not of this or that material, this or that movement, but of the qualities, pleasure and pain in varying proportions.[1]

While Hardy, as a creative artist, must dwell on the outward realities to make objects expressive of individual attitudes and appetites, this excerpt is an appropriate, although highly reductive, summation of the feelings associated with properties and possessions in these three novels. Expressive things are imbued with varying proportions of pleasure and pain as such objects become instrumental in or are associated with the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of individual needs and desires. Memorable scenes are often associated with memorable objects, visually vivid and emotionally charged: the workfolk's delightful enjoyment of the God-forgive-me cup; Venn's sentimental attachment to the pale red and tattered letter within a brown-paper packet within a leather pouch; Jude's agonizing perception of the capital letters of the title page of his Greek Testament, "like the unclosed eyes of a dead man."

As an object becomes part of one's cluster of appurtenances, its proportion of pleasure and pain changes. Bathsheba's receipt of Troy's watch, Clym's inheritance of his mother's relics, and Jude's discovery of his wedding picture in the second-hand shop are moments of grief which signal changing emotional attachments. Bathsheba's valentine and Mrs. Yeobright's guineas have turbulent careers as plot levers, which arouse a variety of responses as they change hands.

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[1]Florence Emily Hardy, The Life of Thomas Hardy (London: Macmillan, 1962) 217.

But the proportion can also simply change over time. Objects rich in personal history are privy to the trials and tribulations of life. In the final scene of Jude, the Delphin editions and Greek Testament, dog-eared and roughened with stone dust, carry with them a freight of associations. These volumes "seemed to pale to a sickly cast at the sounds" of Remembrance Day coming through the open window while Jude lies dead (490). The use of a well-timed pathetic fallacy conveys the bitterness of Jude's defeat, but is also the final observation of the narrative voice of Hardy, who ends his novel-writing career with Jude. In many ways Wessex is a record of Hardy's pleasures and pains; his work, as Norman Page observes, "draws much of its characteristic strength from deeply felt private experiences and preoccupations."[3] The proportion changes in each of the three novels, but in Jude pain outweighs pleasure in Jude's agonizing pilgrimage and in Hardy's explicit social criticism.

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[3]Norman Page, Thomas Hardy (London: Routledge, 1977) 3.

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